A PRESENT

For ſuch as have been

SICK and are RECOVERED;

Or a DISCOURSE concerning

The GOOD which comes out

OF THE

EVIL of AFFLICTION.

Being ſeveral Sermons, Preached after his being raiſed from a Bed of Languiſhing.

By *Nathanael Vincent*, M. A. Miniſter of the Goſpel.

Pſal. 119. 75. *I know* O *Lord that thy Judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulneſs haſt afflicted me.*

Τὸ ὀλιγωρεῖν-καὶ μὴ θέλειν ὑπομένειν συμφορὰς, μεγάλης καὶ ποικίλης ἀφροσύνας ἴδιον.

Μὴ ζήτει γενέσθαι τα γινόμενα ὡς θέλεις, ἀλλὰ θέλε ὡς ἂν τὰ γινόμενα γίνηται. Metrodor.

London, Printed by *T. S.* for *Tho. Parkhurſt* at the *Bible* and *Three Crowns* in *Cheapſide* near *Mercers-Chappel*, 1693.

THE EPISTLE DEDICATORY.

To his Honoured Elder, and onely Brother, Mr. *John Vincent* of *North-hill* in the County of *Cornwall*.

Dear Brother!

Hough you affect to lead a retired Life --- Procul negotiis ----- Ut Prisca Gens mortalium: *Yet I presume this Dedication will not be unacceptable to you; since it signifies my Re-*

covery from thoſe Diſtempers, which I thought would have left you without a Brother in the World. Many indeed were concerned for me; Deſired and Prayed, that I might be ſpared and reſtored; I wiſh my Pains may be bleſst and beneficial to them; according to their Hopes and Expectations. They are thankful to God, that they ſtill enjoy my Labours; and I know the reſtoring of my Health, will be matter of your Thanksgiving, who are ſo full of Brotherly Affection. 'Tis Pitty a Man *of your* Learning, Parts, and Prudence, *has not appeared in a* more Publick Station. *You might have been a more* Common Good, *more your* Countreys Ornament *and* Benefactour, *if your* excels of Modeſty

ſty *had not caſt a* Veil *over your* great Abilities. *I take it for granted, that as you have done, ſo you will ſtill adhere to* His Opinion *who ſaid* ----- Bene qui latuit, bene vixit ----- *And may you much enjoy your ſelf*, My Dear Brother! *and which is infinitely better; may you enjoy* much of God *in your* Beloved Solitude! *May that ſmall Company, which have the Happineſs of your Acquaintance; be directed by your Advice, when they need it; and better'd by your Example! And may all the* Gentry *in my* Native *Country of* Cornwal, *look upon* all Debauchery and Wickedneſs, as Bruitiſh; and as much below them; as you do! *I wiſh the* Sword of Juſtice *were in your*

hand; if it were; I perſwade my ſelf, that the Profane who deſerve it; woul feel the Edge of it; *and* your unblemiſht Life *falling under* greater Obſervation, *would make thoſe, that are otherwiſe, aſhamed of the* Spots *wherewith their* Lives are ſtained.

I know you are not a Stranger to Afflictions of diverſe kinds; *This* Book *which I here Preſent you with; is not* improper *for your Peruſal. 'Tis my Deſire that* no good thing may be withheld *from* You *or* Yours; *and that all* Evils *by their* Sanctification to you, *may have their* Nature quite alter'd, *and* work together for your good! *May* Divine Grace be ſufficient *for you; till you are brought ſafe to the* Heaven-

The Epiſtle Dedicatory.

Heavenly Glory and Kingdom! *There are the* beſt wiſhes *for you that* can be; *and are the* conſtant, daily *ones of*

Your moſt Affectionate Brother, and humble Servant for Chriſts Sake.

Nathanael Vincent.

TO

TO THE READERS,

Especially those who attend upon my Ministry.

Affliction *is an* Argument *much Discoursed of, and the thing it self is commonly felt, for* Man is born unto trouble as the Sparks fly upward: *And yet how* few *know how to* improve *Affliction so as to be* indeed the better *for it*! Judgments, *though dreadful ones, have* little amended *this* Present Age. Rods *have been spent in vain; for men* have received no Correction. *Sin is an inveterate and stubborn malady hard to be cured; the League*

League between the Heart and its beloved Luſts is not eaſily broken. Sinners are inexcuſable in not hearing when God ſpeaks *to them; but when he* ſmites *them, and yet they are as if they were without* Sence; *how void do* they *ſhew themſelves both of* Grace and Reaſon! *Affliction* in this World, *is in Order to amendment; and ſo to prevent future Sorrows and* Wrath in the next; *And* Happy *thoſe who* turn to Him that ſmites them; *and are afraid of feeling* the uttermoſt *of* Sin's deſert *and* God's diſpleaſure! *But they who will not be* purged *in the Furnace of Affliction* now; *but* hold faſt Deceit and refuſe to return *from their evil and deſtructive Ways; ſhall be thrown at laſt, into the* flaming Furnace of Hell-fire, *whoſe heat will never* end *or* abate; *and analterable Confirmation in Wickedneſs, will be a great part of their Eternal Miſery.*

The Word of God commands that the Rod ſhould be heard; *and how* feelingly *does it* teach? *and how dull and ſtupid are they who will not learn the Leſſons of it! The deſign of this Treatiſe*

is

is to make Affliction beneficial *to them that labour under it; that they may not endure a great deal of Sickneſs, Pain, and trouble to* no purpoſe. *Corporal* Diſtempers *are* Spiritual Phyſick; *and this Book ſhews what the* Regimen *Government is; which they ſhould be under that uſe it; that it may* work well, *and conduce to the* ſoundneſs of the Mind, *and the* Souls Healthineſs.

Now the Proſperity and Health of the Soul *is beyond all Conception* valuable. Where this Health is; *how* clear *is the* Judgment! *how* Pure *the Conſcience!* How *Conformable the* Will *unto the* Will *and* Law *of* God *which is ſo* Holy, Juſt and Good! *How* rightly *are the* Affections *placed! Sin being moſt* hated *which is really moſt* hateful! *and the Lord being loved above* all, *who is moſt worthy to be loved! Such an* Healthy Soul *has a* good Appetite *unto* ſpiritual Food, *is ſtrong to* walk *with God and to* work hard *for God, 'tis ſtrong to reſiſt* Temptations to Evil, *and to maintain the* combate with ſpiritual Enemies, *and to* bear Perſecution *for the ſake of Righteouſneſs.*

ouſneſs. Finally, an Healthy Soul is ſtrong through Faith, Fear, Love, and Patience; to perſevere in well-doing *till Glory, Honour, Life, and Immortality are attained.*

Such Healthy Souls, I wiſh all afflicted Ones: and that the following Inſtructions, and Counſels may have a mighty Influence and Efficacy this way! I my Self *of late have* again and again drunk of the bitter Cup *of Affliction. I deſire and hope to Experience more and more the* Medicinal Vertue *of it! And* much good may this Cup do *to all that have it put into their hands!*

The Text I handle was the firſt *I preached upon, after I come out of a* Sick-bed *into the* Pulpit. *My deſign in Publiſhing theſe Sermons, is that the* Hearts *of the Afflicted may be* ſtedfaſt *with God,* after *he has thrown the Rod* out of his Hand; *and that the* Rod *may* bring forth more laſting Fruits of Righteouſneſs!

N. V.

Theſe

These Books written by the Reverend Author, are sold by Tho. Parkhurst *at the* Bible *and* Three Crowns *at the lower end of* Cheapside, *near* Mercers-Chappel.

VV*Orthy Walking*: Preſſed upon all that have heard the *Call of the Goſpel*: From *Eph.* 4. 1. *I therefore the Priſoner of the Lord beſeech you, that ye walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith ye are called.*

The *Spirit of Prayer*: Or, a Diſcourſe, wherein the Nature of Prayer is open'd, the Kinds of Prayer are handled, and the right manner of Praying diſcovered: Several Caſes about this Duty are Reſolved: From *Eph.* 6. 18. *Praying always with all Prayer and Supplication in the Spirit*, &c. Unto which is added, a Direction for the Attaining the Gift of Prayer; That Family-Duty may not be omitted, nor Secret Duty diſcouraged through Inability of Utterance and Expreſſion.

A Heaven or Hell upon Earth: Or, a Diſcourſe concerning Conſcience; on *Acts* 24. 16. *Herein do I exerciſe my ſelf to have a Conſcience*, &c.

The True Touchſtone; which ſhews both *Grace* and *Nature*: Or, a Diſcourſe concerning *Self-*

Self-Examination, by which both Saints and Sinners may come to know themſelves. Whereunto are added ſundry Meditations relating to the Lords Supper.

The more Excellent Way to Edifie the Church of Chriſt: Or, a Diſcourſe concerning Love: The Deſign of which is to Revive that Grace (now under ſuch decays) among *Proteſtants* of ALL Perſwaſions.

The *Converſion of the Soul*: Or, a Diſcourſe Explaining the Nature of that *Converſion* which is ſincere; and Directing and Perſwading all to ceaſe their Loving Sin and Death, and to Turn to God and Live.

A Warning given to Sinners to prepare for *Judgment*, to flee from *Wrath to come*, and turn from *All Sin*; but eſpecially the Sin which does *moſt eaſily beſet them*.

The *Little Childs Catechiſm*: In which the Principles of the Chriſtian Religion are in plain Words and ſhort Anſwers laid down, and ſuited to the Memories and Underſtandings of Little Children. Whereunto are added ſeveral ſhort Hiſtories, which may both pleaſe and profit them, as alſo Directions how to Pray.

The *Principles of the Doctrine of Chriſt*: Or, a Catechiſm, in which is contained the Sum of the *Chriſtian Religion*; or what is neceſſary to be *believed* and *done* in order to *Salvation*. The Anſwers being but *Seventeen* in number; and in very plain words, eaſie to be underſtood. Unto which is added, a Catechiſm for Conſcience; wherein

wherein the Conſciences of the *Ignorant*, the *groſly Profane*, the *Young*, the *meerly Mortal*, and the *Hypocrites*, are examined, in order to their *Inſtruction* and *Awakening*; and the Conſciences of the *ſincere Chriſtians* are tried in order to their *Peace* and *Comfort*.

The *Saints Triumph* over the *Laſt Enemy*: In a Sermon Preached at the Funeral of that Zealous and Painful Miniſter of Chriſt, Mr. *James Janeway*. Unto which is added, His Character. His ſore Conflict before he died: And afterwards, His Triumphant manner of departing from Earth, to the Heavenly Inheritance. On 1 *Cor.* 15. 55. *O Death, where is thy ſting?* ——

Iſraels Lamentation at the *Death* of a *Prophet*. In a Sermon Preached at the Funeral of that Holy, Learned, and Painful Miniſter of Chriſt, Mr. *Thomas Cawton*. And now publiſhed at the earneſt Deſire of the Hearers. On 1 *Sam.* 25. 1, *And* Samuel *died, and all the* Iſraelites *were gathered together, and lamented him.* ——

A *Funeral Sermon*: Occaſioned by the Death of Mr. *George Baker*. Firſt Preached, and then Publiſhed, at the earneſt Deſire of his Relations. On 1 *Pet.* 1. 17. —— *Paſs the Time of your Sojourning here in Fear.*

The *Great Change*: Diſcourſed of in a Funeral Sermon, occaſioned by the Death of Mrs. *Martha Thompſon*, late Wife of Captain *William Thompſon* in *Wapping*. On *Job* 14. 14. —— *All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.*

The

The Good of Affliction.

Pſalm 119. 71.

It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy Statutes.

THough I appear not in the face of this Aſſembly as *One riſen from the dead*, yet as *One raiſed from the very brink of the Grave*, and am again ſent to Preach the Word of Life, the Goſpel of Salvation. Since I was laſt in this place, I have been brought very near to *another World*; and when I had *a clearer view* of it, I found that *God was All*; and that *all this World was nothing, leſs than nothing and vanity.* When Sickneſs lies heavy, and the *laſt Enemy Death*, ſeems entring in at the door; believe me, *then* it appears that Divine Favour is *better than Life*; the *ſuccours* of our *merciful and faithful High-Prieſt* the Lord Jeſus; the *ſupports* of his *Grace*; and that *Peace of God which paſſes all underſtanding*; are things of real and of the higheſt value. I did not know

but that my Work and Life might be just ending; but that I might quickly be in that place, where I should *see Man no more*; nor Preach any more the Word of Reconciliation. But behold! in Answer to the *prayers of many*, health is restored; and my Sickness will prove *good* both to *me* and *you*, if I am more *sincere* in the *exercise* of; and you are more *serious* in your *attendance* upon my *Ministry*.

I have been *Once* and *again* brought back from the *gates of Death*; my obligation is increased to *live more to God*; and to endeavour to do *more good to the Souls of men*. I wish these ends of my life, towards the conclusion of it, may be attained more than ever. The dealings of God with me of late have been very remarkable; I desire aright to *regard the operation of his hands*; and *wisely to consider of his doings*. He has come into my house with a *Rod* in his hand; and to *one* Member of my Family he gave a *deadly blow*; and others he has struck down; though not quite; yet near to the Grave. I my self have been of late *twice* seized with a *Death threatning Malady*; and am here before you all to *accept the punishment of my iniquity*; whereby *infinitely worse* has been *deserved*, than what I have undergone: I *kiss* the Rod for the *needful healing strokes* of it, which I have felt; and great reason I have to *proclaim* my *Chastizers faithfulness* and *love*; and how *good 'tis for me that I have been afflicted*.

In

In the words which I have read; these particulars are observable.

1. Here is an Exercise *sharp and sore* to *Nature*; and which will put *Grace* upon the *Tryal*, and prove the *truth* and *strength* of it; and this Exercise is *Affliction*.

2. The *Person* thus exercised is the Psalmist, who was both *Saint* and *Preacher*. Saints are afflicted, that they may be more throughly sanctified: Preachers are afflicted, that they may Preach and labour to better purpose.

3. From *whom came* the Psalmists Affliction? the *Rod* which he felt was in *God's hand*: To *Him* he speaks in the Text; being sensible he had to do with God; and God had to do with him. *Rods*, though of *sins meriting*; are of *God's making*: All *bitter Cups*, are of *God's own mingling*: the *kind*, the *measure*, the *continuance* of Affliction is of the *Lord's own appointment*.

4. The *Issue* of Affliction follows; it issued *well* in the Psalmists *truest good*; it made him really better than he was before; therefore good for him indeed: It was *medicinal to his Soul*; the *inward man was more renewed*; heart and life both very much amended.

5. Here is a *demonstration*; that Affliction was thus beneficial to him; because *in the School of Affliction* he learnt *God's Statutes better*; he learned to *prize* them; for in the following verse, he preferred them *before thousands of gold and silver*: And thus looking upon them as an *invaluable*

Treasure, here is an intimation that he *kept* them, with a conscientious and affectionate care and diligence.

I raise two Doctrines from the words.

The *one* is, *That Saints are afflicted for their good.*

The *other* is, *That the Rod of God is a means to make his Word to be the better learned.*

Doct. I. I begin with the first of these Doctrines; *That Saints are afflicted for their good*; they are the better and happier for being chastened; *Job* 5. 17. *Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth; therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty.* Chastening is *despised*, if it be lookt upon only as a *misery*; which has so great a tendency to *promote* our *happiness*; Jam. 5. 11. *Behold we count them happy which endure: Ye have heard of the patience of* Job, *and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.* Both these passages have *Behold* prefixed to them; they seem *Paradoxes* to carnal reason; but if the Eye of the Understanding be opened to look into the matter, it will be perceived that Affliction and Happiness are not *disparata*, which never meet in the same subject; the Saints are the more blessed the more they are corrected! That passage may be called a *Threatning*, because Affliction

fliction is a puniſhment of Iniquity; and alſo a Promiſe, becauſe Correction ends in Amendment; *Pſal.* 89. 30, 31, 32, 33. *If his Childrrn forſake my* Law, *and walk not in my Judgments; If they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments; then will I viſit their Tranſgreſſion with a Rod, and their Iniquity with Stripes: Nevertheleſs my loving-kindneſs will I not utterly take from him, nor ſuffer my faithfulneſs to fail.*

In the handling of this Doctrine I ſhall,

Firſt, Demonſtrate the *Truth* of it *by ſeveral Arguments.*

Secondly, I ſhall *ſpecifie what that good* is which accrews to the Saints by Affliction.

Thirdly, Conclude with the *Application.*

In the firſt place I am to demonſtrate that Saints are afflicted for their good.

The Arguments demonſtrating this, are theſe.

1. Afflictions are of *God's own ſending, whoſe goodneſs is manifeſted in* the ſending of them. The Afflictions which the Saints feel, are ordered in Heaven for them. *Job* regards not ſo much the malice of Satan, nor the injuſtice and violence of Man, in that ſore Calamity which ſo ſuddenly fell upon him; but his Eye looks as high as God in it; *Job* 1. 21. *The Lord has taken away; bleſſed be the Name of the Lord!* Well may he be bleſſed; for the Lord *ceaſes not to be good* to his People when he takes a *Rod into*

his hand to beat them. Afflictions in Scripture are compared to Waters; and these Waters come out of *Paradise*, and *savour* of it. Give me leave to *search the Springs* of these Waters, and trace them to the Fountain head; and upon due search it will be found that they flow from the *truest love*, the *wisest care*, the *greatest faithfulness*.

1. The Saints Afflictions flow from *the truest love*; Heb. 12. 6. *Whom the Lord loves, he chastens; and scourgeth every Son whom he receives.* Now Tokens of Love, are to be reckoned among the good things, not the evil. The Lord chastens his Children whom he delights in; that he may make them more lovely; and his delight in them may be the greater. Indeed in Nature 'tis otherwise; *The same Fountain cannot at the same place send forth sweet Water and bitter*; *Jam.* 3. 11. Yet certain it is, that *all* the *sweetnesses*, and *bitternesses* of a Christian, come from *one* and the *same Fountain*, the *Everlasting* Love of God in Christ Jesus.

2. The Saints Afflictions flow from the *wisest care*. God cares for his People, and bids them cast all their care upon him; 1 *Pet.* 5. 7. *Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you.* When *Nebuchadnezzar*'s countenance was full of rage; and the three Children were threatned with a fiery Furnace seven times heated; they were confident of God's care; and had said and stood to it; *We are not careful to answer thee*; but *be it known to thee, we will not serve thy Gods, nor worship the Golden Image thou hast set up*; *Dan.* 3. 16, 18.

16, 18. God's care of them was great in this extreme peril. And he cares for all his Saints; their *life*, their *health*, their *comforts* are *precious* in his Eyes; and they shall not be toucht, but when necessity and conveniency calls for it.

3. The Saints Afflictions flow from the *greatest faithfulness*. The Church in the very depths of trouble cries out, *Great is thy faithfulness!* Jer. 3. 23. *I know, O Lord*, says the Psalmist, *that thy Judgments are right; and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me*; *Psal.* 119. 75. The Physicians faithfulness appears in giving very bitter Potions, which are a means to save the Patients life. Sharp Afflictions are often necessary to recover the health of the Soul; divine faithfulness is manifested in this method of recovery. This faithfulness of God *debates* with the *Rod when it shoots forth*, lest it should be *too heavy*, and rather *make an end* of, than *mend* his Children; *Isa.* 27. 8. *In measure when it shooteth forth thou wilt debate with it; he stayeth his rough Wind in the day of the East Wind*: For if both these Winds should blow together, the Saints might not be able to stand against them. That is the *first* Argument to prove the goodness of Affliction; it is of *God's sending*; and in sending of it, his *love*, and *care*, and *faithfulness* is manifested.

2. Afflictions are sent with a *design that afflicted Saints may be benefited*. He does not *afflict willingly, nor grieve the Children of Men*: The Lord sees they have *need of it*, and therefore *they are in heavinesse*: But when Affliction is as it were

plowing upon the backs of the Saints; and *long and deep furrows* are made; the Lord at that very time is *ſowing* both *light*, and *grace*, and *joy*; and how *plentiful* will the *Harveſt* be! *Pſal.* 97. 11. *Light is ſown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart*; Heb. 12. 11. *Chaſtening does yield the peaceable fruits of righteouſneſs to them who are exerciſed thereby.* Earthly Parents are oftentimes tranſported with *paſſion*, and act after their own humour and pleaſure in correcting of their Children; and then their Children are rather provoked to anger, and diſcouraged, than amended. But hereby it moſt evidently appears; 'tis good for the Saints that they are afflicted; becauſe their Father, who is the Father of Spirits, does chaſtize *his Children for their profit*, that is, their ſpiritual profit and advantage; that they may be partakers of his holineſs; *Heb.* 12. 10. And the truth is, we are never *more profited*, than when we are *moſt ſanctified.*

3. The Afflictions of the Saints are *diſpenſed to them through Chriſt Jeſus*; therefore they muſt needs be good for them; for *nothing* comes to them through *Him*, that is *otherwiſe.* He has *born the Saints ſins*, ſo that they are neither condemned nor commanded by them: He unſtings death, before it ſeizes upon any of his Members; ſo that the venom and poiſon of death, which is ſin, is gone; and death without a ſting is not to be dreaded. And Chriſt has alſo born the Saints *Sickneſſes* and *Infirmities*; *Mat.* 8. 17. and ſo the *cauſe* of them is removed: God does not demand

ſatisfaction

ſatisfaction to his Juſtice in the Afflictions of his People; for Chriſt by his Sufferings has made full Satisfaction. He does not exact *Law Payment* of them, for Chriſt was made *under the Law*, and fulfilled it, and *bare the Curſe* due to Believers for tranſgreſſing of it. The Blood of Jeſus Chriſt, how does it alter Afflictions! it turns them into profitable and healing Medicines! Oh *Bleſſed Troubles*, in which Chriſt himſelf *Sympathizes* with Souls that are troubled! *Iſa.*63. 9. *In all their Afflictions, he was afflicted, and the Angel of his Preſence ſaved them.* 'Tis certainly good to be in the *Furnace*, if the *Son of God* be there with us; to mitigate the heat of it, and to conſume the *droſs* only, while the *Metal is ſecured*, and *purified*!

4. Afflictions make the Saints *Conformable to Chriſt their Head*, and 'tis never better with the Members; than when there is the greateſt reſemblance in them to their Head and Lord. He was *perfected* as Mediatour *through Sufferings*. At length he ſuffer'd ſo much, that he cried out, *It is finiſhed*; he paid a full Price for his Churches Redemption; and made her Everlaſting Peace. His Members alſo muſt be *perfected* in *Mortification* and Holineſs by *Sufferings* alſo; theſe help to pull down Pride, and Self-confidence; to tame the Fleſh, and to check and kill the Affections and Luſts of it. Happy Afflictions! which make afflicted Believers more like to their Lord in whom they

do

do believe! In *Conformity* to Christ lies our Excellency and Safety. This Conformity is in a ſpecial manner deſigned, *Rom.* 8. 29. *For whom he did foreknow, he alſo did predeſtinate to be conformed to the Image of his Son, that he might be the firſt born among many Brethren.* The Image of the *Earthly Adam* is our *Shame*, the Image of the *Heavenly Adam* is our *Glory*.

5. The Afflictions of the Saints are *under a Promiſe that they ſhall work for good.* The *Medicines* which the great Phyſician of Souls gives to Believers do *Work well*, as they are very proper, ſo very Effectual, *Rom.* 8. 28. *We know* ſays the Apoſtle, we are *aſſured* of it by *Faith*, and we find it *true* by *Experience*; That *all things Work together for good, to them that love God; who are called according to his purpoſe.* God himſelf *will Work* along with Calamities and Troubles of *all ſorts*, and bring forth *much good* out of the *very worſt* of them. They work upon the *Hearts* of the Saints, and better the *frame* and *temper* and *Inclinations of them.* They work upon their *Tongues*, and lay a *Bridle* upon them; and bring them under the *Law* of *Holineſs, Love and Kindneſs*; they work upon the Actions, making them more agreeable to that *Rule*, which whoſoever walk according to, *Peace and Mercy ſhall be upon them.* Nay Afflictions work no leſs than *Glory*, and when the Apoſtle conſidered the Weight and Eternity of that Glory,

he

he made light of the heavieſt Afflictions; the Benefit is unconceiveably vaſt, that quickly is reaped from them, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. *For our light Affliction which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more Exceeding and Eternal weight of Glory.* Not that Affliction and Suffering though for Righteouſneſs ſake, does *deſerve this Glory*, but it makes it the more Minded and Deſired, and is a means to make us meet for the Enjoyment of it; and the Promiſe is ſure, that if *we ſuffer* according to the Will of God, we ſhall alſo *Reign with him.*

6. Afflictions muſt needs be granted to the Saints, *for they purge out the worſt evil of all; and that is Sin.* Oh! καθ' ὑπερβολὴν ἁμαρτωλὸς *out of meaſure ſinful Sin!* No Name ſo bad as thy own! No Evil ſo great as thou art! Let all *the Calamities of the Earth*, and all the *Miſeries of Hell*, be put into the *One Scale together*; and *Sin* into the *other*; as Sin is the *Cauſe* of them all, ſo it will *outweigh* them all. 'Tis the *abominable thing which Gods Soul hates.* 'Tis the great *Evil and Enemy whereby Mans Soul is ruined.* How much is Affliction good for! ſince 'tis a Soveraign means, whereby ſuch an Evil as Sin, is purged away, *Iſa.* 27. 9. *By this therefore ſhall the Iniquity of* Jacob *be purged, and this is all the Fruit, to take away his Sin.*

7. The Afflictions of the Saints are means to *prevent their Eternal Sufferings in the other World.* The Rod is of their Fathers own Appointment,

to deliver his Childrens Souls from Hell. Preſent *Caſtigation* prevents Eternal *Condemnation*, 1 Cor. 11. 32. *But when we are judged, we are chaſtned of the Lord, that we might not be condemned with the World.* Not that, Sin has not *ill demerit enough* to make us obnoxious to Sufferings in *both Worlds*; not that *Chaſtizement* makes *ſatisfaction* for Tranſgreſſion: But it makes the Saints *to fly to the Lord Jeſus*, for the making up of all breaches between God and them; which Sin has made; and 'tis effectual to make them truly Humble and Penitent: Now Faith and Repentance have the Promiſe of Life annexed to them. *Whoſoever believes on the Son of God, ſhall not periſh, but have Everlaſting Life*, Joh. 3. 16. And Repentance is ſaid to be *unto Salvation* and conſequently *not be repented of*, 2 Cor. 7. 10.

8. Afflictions bring the *Saints nearer to God*; and to be near to Him, how *good is it for them*! Pſal. 73. 28. God expects a more ſerious ſeeking, and a nearer approach when he afflicts his People, *Hoſ.* 5. 15. *I will go and return to my Place, till they acknowledge their Offence, and ſeek my Face; in their Affliction they will ſeek me early.* And his People Anſwer his Expectation, *Hoſ.* 6. 1. They ſay, *Come and let us return to the Lord, for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he has ſmitten, and he will bind us up.* Afflicted Saints inquire after God, they come with their Penitential Acknowledgments; and deſire more fully to know wherefore it is that he Contends; that

that the ground of the Controverſie may be removed. *It is meet* that the Afflicted Saint *ſhould ſay*, and with *his Heart he does* ſay it unto God. *I have born Chaſtiſement, I will not offend any more; that which I ſee not, teach thou me, if I have done Iniquity I will do no more*, Job 34. 31, 32. All that is within him now yields unto God, and being *melted* in the Furnace of Affliction, he deſires to be caſt into the *mould* of his Word. Happy blows! which drive the Saints to God, and ſtrengthen their Reſolutions to abide with God! Thus have I *demonſtrated* that *Saints* are afflicted *for their good.*

In the Second Place, I am to *ſpecifie that good which accrews to the Saints by Affliction.*

1. One good conſequent of Affliction, *is a greater Power of Spiritual Diſcerning.* Prov. 29. 15. *The Rod and Reproof give Wiſdom.* If Mans Rod does ſo, then it follows, that the Rod of God does it much more. Gods *Teaching* accompanies his *Chaſtning*, and *who Teaches like him*? Afflictions clear the Eye of the Soul; ſo that it is more *Single* and *Piercing.* It ſees now plainly, through the deceitfulneſs of Sin. It ſees the *Worlds emptineſs* and Vanity, and an *End* of all its Perfection. It ſees the *Subtilty of the old Serpent*, and how much it concerns all neither to believe, nor follow him. It diſcerns the *Inſufficiency*, *Weakneſs*, and *Wickedneſs* of *Self*; and that 'tis neither to be truſted

ſted in, ſought, or pleaſed. It ſees the *greatneſs of* that *Salvation* which is in *Chriſt*; and what an *All-ſufficient and Eternal Portion* the *Lord Jehovah* is. And the Afflicted Saints Knowledge of all this, is more than Notional. He knows by Experience as well as Speculation the Evil of Sin; and the *unſuitableneſs* of the World is *plain* to his *Spiritual Senſe*, and ſo is the *Power of the Grace* of Chriſt. In Affliction, the *other World opens*, and the Eye *looks* into it; and what a *Cypher* then is this whole Globe of Earth and Waters! The Apoſtles *outward Man periſhed*: He was exerciſed with Affliction; and what *clear views* had he then of *things unſeen*? 2 *Cor.* 4. 16, 18. *For which cauſe we faint not, but though our outward man periſh; our inward man is renewed day by day. While we look not at the things that are ſeen, but at the things that are not ſeen; for the things that are ſeen are Temporal, but the things that are not ſeen are Eternal.*

2. Another good Conſequent of Affliction, is *a more Pure and tender Conſcience.* How great a Miſery is it to have a ſtupid Conſcience, that is *without* or *paſt* feeling! When a man has all his *own Guilt*, and the *Wrath of God* abiding upon him; not a *Promiſe in the Bible* belonging to him, all the *threatnings full charged* with *Curſes and Woes*, juſt *ready to be diſcharged at him*: And He himſelf is upon the very brink of Hell, juſt ready to tumble in every Moment; and yet is *altogether unſenſible*

ſible of any *danger*! Such a ſenſeleſs Conſcience is a *deadly Sign*; it argues Spiritual Death to have full Power; and Eternal Death to be at the door; In the *depths of Deſpair* there is more *Probability* of Salvation; than in the *heighth of Preſumption*. But Affliction *ſtartles the Conſcience*, how quick is its *Sight* and *Senſe then*! The Saints have recourſe to the *Blood of* Chriſt to *purge their Conſciences* from all *the Dead works* in which they have been formerly employed. And that Blood is ſufficient for their *Purgation and Peace*, Heb. 9. 14. *How much more ſhall the Blood of Chriſt, who through the Eternal Spirit offered up himſelf without Spot to God; purge your Conſciences from dead Works, to ſerve the Living God!* And afflicted Saints are exceedingly *afraid* of making *new wounds* in their Conſciences, ſince the *Smart* of *former wounds* in their Spirits was ſo *intolerable*, Lam. 3. 19, 20. *Remembring my Affliction and my Miſery, the Wormwood and the Gall; my Soul has them ſtill in remembrance and is humbled in me.*

3. Another good Conſequent of Affliction, is *the Mortification of the Sin of Pride*. Pride is a Sin *hateful to God*, it *ſtrikes* at his *Glory* which *God aims at* in every thing he does. And Pride is very *hurtful* to man, 'tis the hindrance of the Help which Divine Grace affords; for God *who gives Grace to the Humble*, inſtead of *aſſiſting* does *reſiſt the Proud*, 1 Pet. 5. 5. And this Pride is the forerunner

of

of *falls* into *Sin* and Ruine, therefore ſays *Solomon*. *Pride goes before Deſtruction and an haughty Spirit before a fall* The Lord cannot endure this Pride in his Saints, and Affliction is ſent to kill it: The Troubles which the *Iſraelites* met with in the Wilderneſs, when they were encountred with *Fiery Serpents and Scorpions, and Drought*; and many other Calamities, the end of them all was to *Humble them and Prove them, and to do them good in the latter end.* Deut. 8. 15, 16. A Saint who comes out of the Fire of Affliction with a Meek and humble Spirit; his high Conceits and Thoughts of himſelf all caſt down; ſeeing himſelf to be nothing, but what he is by the Grace of God; this man looks *like Silver coming out of a Furnace of Earth purified ſeven times*, and what a ſhining *brightneſs and luſtre* is upon him.

4. Another good Conſequent of Affliction is *a more perfect Subjection of the whole Man to God.* There is a Submiſſion to Him, by a *Penitential Acknowledgment* of Offences againſt him, and *juſtifying* of him in his *ſevereſt Diſpenſations*, Neh. 9. 33. *Howbeit thou art juſt in all that is brought upon us, for thou haſt done Right, but we have done Wickedly.* There is a Submiſſion to *his Righteouſneſs*, a great ſenſe, that 'tis by the *Righteouſneſs* of *One* onely the *ſecond* Adam; that the *Free Gift comes upon all* that are in him *unto Juſtification of Life.* Rom. 5. 18. So *Rom.* 10. 4. *Chriſt is the end*

of

of the Law for Righteouſneſs to every one that believeth. There is likewiſe a *Subjection of Body and Soul* unto the *commands* of God, which reach the *whole man*, and require ſervice from the *whole*. And Affliction quickens Deſires after Grace, to keep theſe Precepts better; ſo that there may not be *a wandring* from them, *Pſal.* 119. 10. *With my whole Heart have I ſought thee, oh let me not wander from thy Commandments.* Sin's ſervice becomes more irkſome, the Law of Sin more grievous; but the Lords ſervice is accounted *Liberty* and *Life*, Rom. 6. 22. *But now being made free from Sin, and become Servants to God, ye have your Fruit unto Holineſs, and the end Everlaſting Life.*

5. Another good Conſequent of Affliction is *greater Exactneſs and Spirituality in Duty and Obedience.* Affliction cauſes Saints to Eye *their Hearts* more, which *God* does Eye *Principally.* Lip Labour, Bodily Exerciſe, outward Ceremonies; are perceived to be, when *alone*, altogether *inſignificant.* Afflicted Saints give God their very Hearts: The *Strength* and *Vigour* of their *Spirits* and *Affections:* 'tis very evident to them, that He alone is Worthy of them. And *Chriſt*, not *Self*, has their Confidence; *Phil.* 3. 3. *We are the Circumciſion, who Worſhip God in the Spirit; rejoice in Chriſt Jeſus, and have no Confidence in the Fleſh.* Afflicted Saints lift up their Souls to God; in

his hand they are safe, and this is the Way to have them satisfied and fill'd with Joy, *Psal.* 86. 4. *Rejoice the Soul of thy Servant for unto thee O Lord do I lift up my Soul.* Duties to God are performed with *more Grace*, and Duties to Man are done with a greater *regard* unto *God* Himself. Gods Approbation is more minded; and the Eye being *single* looks not so much at other things, but aims at this, that God *in all things may have Glory*; which indeed of Right appertains to Him.

6. Another good Consequent of Affliction is a *more full and compleat Victory over the World, and silencing the God of it.* When Sickness seizeth upon the Saints; the *Love* of the *World* is hereby struck *more dead.* The World is *out of Countenance*, and ashamed *now* to appear; it's *alluring Power* and *Charms* are *all gone.* And Satan the God of it, does not so much care *now to offer* it. Mammon can neither cure the diseased Body, nor ease the afflicted Mind. Affliction takes off the *fine Mask* upon *Mammons Face*, and then 'tis plainly seen how *sorry a Master* he is; and how poor all his store. The World cannot yield *true Contentment* to any, for that *little while* they are the Inhabitants of it; and can any thing of *this World* be carried away into *another World*? Ah no! 1 *Tim.* 6. 7. *For we brought nothing into this World, and 'tis certain we can carry nothing out.* He that has most of the World, what

what is it all to him, when he is *leaving* the World and *all behind* him?

Suppoſe the *greateſt Poſſeſſour* of Earthly Riches, *lying* upon a *Death-bed*; in his fainting Fits, and dying Agonies; lay ſome baggs of Gold upon his Pillows, bring in the ſweeteſt Conſort of Muſick, ſhew him the coſtlieſt Raiment he ever wore; let a Table be ſpread and furniſht with the choiceſt Dainties, and let the greateſt Beauties ſtand by him, proffering themſelves and their ſervice to him. Alas! Alas! what's all this to a Man that is breathing out his laſt Breath; and ready to appear and give an account of himſelf unto the Judge of all? Affliction gives a *ſmart Admonition*, that this World is to be contemned in Compariſon of the *better and enduring Subſtance*. Satan, notwithſtanding his Subtlety, is eaſily baffled in Affliction; think ſeriouſly of Death and Judgment; and *all* that He offers is *juſt nothing*; though he ſhould make as large an offer, as he did to Chriſt in the hour of his Temptation, when he *ſhewed him all the Kingdoms of the World and the Glory of them.*

7. Another good Conſequent of Affliction, is *an Increaſe of Grace, and an abundance of the Fruits of Righteouſneſs.* Wicked men *receive not Correction*, being put into the Furnace, they are found, and *rejected* as *Reprobate Silver*; but the Correction of the Saints, is

the Probation, Augmentation, and evidencing of the Grace of God in them. *Faith* is tried, and by trial is ſtrengthned, *Patience*, *Experience*, *Hope* augmented, *Rom.* 5. 3, 4, 5. *Tribulation worketh Patience*, *Patience Experience*, *Experience Hope*, *and Hope maketh not aſhamed, becauſe the Love of God is ſhed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghoſt which is given to us.* The Lords tender Compaſſions towards his afflicted Children, exceedingly endears him their Father to them! His gracious Viſits, His ſtretching forth his own Everlaſting Arm for their Suſtentation, when ready to ſink under their Burthens; His remembring Mercy in the greateſt Severity, His being within call, and readineſs to hear and help; fills their Hearts with Love, and Reſolution to live and cleave to him. With how much Tenderneſs and Compaſſion, does the Lord expreſs himſelf towards his afflicted ones! *Pſal.* 69. 33. *For the Lord heareth the Poor and deſpiſeth not his Priſoners.* And *Pſal.* 22. 24. *For he hath not deſpiſed nor abhorred the Affliction of the afflicted, neither hath he hid his Face from him; but when he cried unto him he heard.*

Saints are great gainers by Affliction, becauſe *Godlineſs* which is *great Gain*, which is *profitable for all things*, is more powerful than before. The *Rod* of Correction by a *Miracle* of Grace, like that of *Aarons*, Buds and Bloſſoms, and brings forth the Fruits of Righteouſneſs, which are moſt excellent. A rare ſight it is indeed to ſee a man coming

coming out of a bed of Languiſhing, or any other Furnace of Affliction; more *like* to *Angels* in *Purity*, more *like* to *Chriſt* who was *Holy, Harmleſs, Undefiled, and ſeparate from Sinners*; more *like* unto *God himſelf*, being *more exactly Righteous in all his ways*, and more exemplarily *Holy in all manner of Converſation.*

8. Another good Conſequent of Affliction, is *an high eſteem of Time, and affecting Apprehenſions of Death, Judgment, and Eternity.* Affliction brings Death within view. *Jobs Calamity* makes his *Mortality* much thought of; the things of the *World* had *left him*; he ſpeaks as a man juſt ready to *leave* the World, *Job* 17. 1, 13, 14. *My Breath is corrupt, my Days are extinct, the Graves are ready for me. If I wait the Grave is my Houſe, I have made my Bed in the Darkneſs. I have ſaid to Corruption, thou art my Father; and to the Worm, thou art my Mother and my Siſter.* He claims kindred to the Worms and Corruption, Death was moſt familiar to his Thoughts; and in his Imagination, the Grave was his Bed already.

Now at Death the Saints conſider, that *Time* comes to *a full ſtop*; and *Judgment* will follow, and *fix* them in *Eternity.* It is of great uſe to us; when our *Thoughts dwell* in Eternity, before we our ſelves enter upon Eternity; this makes an *Holy and Happy Eternity infinitely deſireable* in our Eyes! And now do we *look unto Jeſus*! through

whom Eternal Life is given! and with what Circumſpection is the way of Holineſs walked in, which ends in Life Everlaſting! *Rom.* 6. 22, 23. Affliction awakens the Saints care, to improve Time, to *work while 'tis day*; for it will be *too late* to work, when the *Night is once come*; and how are they concerned, that there time be not ended, before Eternity be well provided for!

9. Another good Conſequent of Affliction, is *Serious Diligence to make the Calling and Election ſure.* When Affliction finds us at *uncertainties* in reference to our *Spiritual State*, our doubts and fears are amazing and tormenting. 'Tis ſad for a man to look upon himſelf as dying, and then to ſay,

O animula vagula blandula,
Qua nunc abibis in loca?

O my Soul thou art departing hence, but whither, oh whither art thou going? What *is like to be the place of thy Eternal abode, which muſt never be changed?* To be *dying* and *doubting* at the ſame time is very ſad, though we are *really* never ſo ſafe. What is a wellgrounded Evidence of the Love of God in Chriſt, worth upon a bed of Sickneſs? How valuable and comfortable the *Spirits Teſtimony* concerning our *Adoption!* Now Affliction puts the Saints upon a more *ſtrict* and *impartial Self-examination*; and upon a more *thorow* and *perceivable* turning unto God, *Lam.* 3. 39, 40.

39, 40. *Wherefore, doth the living man complain, a man for the Puniſhment of his Sins? Let us ſearch and try our ways and turn unto the Lord our God.* Affliction makes that Admonition of the Apoſtle to be heeded, 2 Pet. 1. 10, 11. *Wherefore the rather Brethren give diligence to make your Calling and Election ſure; for if ye do theſe things ye ſhall never fall: For ſo an entrance ſhall be adminiſtred to you abundantly into the Everlaſting Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt.*

When once a Chriſtian has attained unto a *Senſe* and *Aſſurance* of the favour of God; how prepared is he for whatever may befall him! He can lie eaſie upon a Sick-bed; becauſe *his God* makes *his Bed for him,* Pſal. 41. 3. *The Lord will ſtrengthen him upon the bed of Languiſhing; thou wilt make all his Bed in his Sickneſs.* Nay the preſence of his God makes him fearleſs in the *gloomy Valley* of the *Shadow of Death,* Pſal. 23. 4. *Though I walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.*

10. Another good Conſequent of Affliction, is *ſpiritualized Affections, and a Converſation more in Heaven.* Saints are caſt down by Affliction, that they may *riſe* with Chriſt and feel the *Power of his Reſurrection more.* That's a leſſon, which every Rod is ſent to teach, *Col.* 3. 2. *Set your Affection on things above, and not on things which are upon the Earth.* The harder the Ball is flung to the ground, it rebounds the higher; when

God *flings* a Saint *down* with a *mighty Hand*, his Heart ſhould rebound higher towards Heaven, imitating thoſe excellent and faithful Ones; *who confeſſed they were ſtrangers and Pilgrims on the Earth, who declared plainly they ſought a better Countrey*, than any Countrey on Earth, becauſe they ſought an *Heavenly Countrey*. And *God was not aſhamed to be called their God, for he prepared for them a City*. Heb. 11. 13, 16.

The Pſalmiſt was very much helped towards Heaven by Chaſtiſement, *Pſal.* 73. 14. *All the day long* (ſays he) *have I been plagued, and chaſtned every Morning*. And though for *a while Temptation* prevailed, yet at length his Thoughts and Eyes are fixed right, upon that *Glory* promiſed to ſuch as give up themſelves to God, and to be *guided by his Counſel*, V. 23. 24. *Nevertheleſs I am continually with thee, thou haſt holden me by my right Hand. Thou ſhalt guide me with thy Counſel, and afterward receive me to Glory*. Afflicted Saints ſtudy and endeavour to *ſhew forth* the *Power and Vertue* both of their Lord's *Death* and *Riſing again*. How profitable is it to Dye, and to be Crucified with him! to be *Dead to the World* and *all the Evil* of it! And how Sweet and Pleaſant is it to *riſe with him*, and by *earneſts* and *foretaſts* of Glory to ſit *with Him in Heavenly Places*. Eph. 2. 4, 5, 6. *But God who is Rich in Mercy for the great Love, wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in Sin hath quickned us together with Chriſt*, (*by*

(by Grace ye are ſaved:) And hath raiſed us up together, and made us ſit together in Heavenly Places in Chriſt Jeſus.

How great and good are theſe Conſequents, which follow upon Affliction!

I come in the laſt Place to the *Application.*

And ſhall begin with ſome *Corollaries* drawn from the Doctrine.

If Saints are afflicted for their good,

1. Hence we may inferr, Afflictions are *not Signs of Gods hatred*, rather *Tokens of his Love*, They are the *Lot of the Righteous.* Pſal. 34. 19. *Many are the Afflictions of the Righteous, but the Lord delivereth them* at length *out of them all.* They are trained up under the Yoak; and bearing it well, is greatly beneficial. *Man is born unto Trouble, as the ſparks fly upward.* Troubles like ſparks of Fire are innumerable, which fill the few days of the Life of Man. But thoſe who are *born again* uſually have more troubles than other men. God cares for them, Hedges up their *way with Thorns*, which they may be afraid to *break thorow*; into *Paths* which are *deſtructive.* Hoſ. 2. 6. *Therefore, behold I will Hedge up thy way with Thorns; and make a wall, that ſhe ſhall not find her Paths.* Happy Saints in their Afflictions! who have both a *Thorny Hedge*, and alſo *a wall between*

between them, and the *broad* Road which leads unto Eternal Perdition!

The Saints make an ill Comment upon their Afflictions, when they ſay, *God cares not for them, nor how he deals with them.* Several of them have *born the Yoak in their Youth*, and have ſtill *carried it to their Graves.* It is ſaid of *One who lately died*, that upon his Death-bed being asked, *How long he had been ill?* made this Reply, that he had been ill *for fifty Years together.* Chriſt was a *Man of Sorrows*, and yet the *Son of Gods Love.* You may be very much beloved of God, and yet be very much and often acquainted with griefs.

2. Saints in their Afflictions *ſhould not be cenſured becauſe afflicted.* Holy *Job*, was ſtript naked, and deprived of all that he had; and was ſmitten in his Perſon from Head to Foot; yet he was *truly* and *eminently good*, and under all theſe *Evils* held *faſt his Righteouſneſs and Integrity.* His Cenſorious Friends were blame-worthy in concluding him an Hypocrite, becauſe of his Sufferings. He had a greater underſtanding in the things of God, a ſounder Judgment, and more Grace in his Heart than they. The excellent young *Elihu* ſpake right indeed, when he pronounced *Job*, a man to be *juſtified* as to his State, *Job* 33. 32. But he blames him becauſe in vindicating himſelf, he ſpoke that, which *too much reflected* upon God himſelf, and therefore tells him, *Job* 34. 23. *That God will not lay upon* any *Man*, not upon the

the beſt of Men, *more than is Right, that he ſhould enter into Judgment with God.*

But as for the other three Friends of *Job*, who judged *Job* unſound in his Religion, becauſe of Gods heavy hand upon him; they are very ſharply rebuked. The Lord owns his Servant whom they had ſo cenſured, *Job* 42. 7. *The Lord ſaid to* Eliphaz *the* Temanite, *my Wrath is kindled againſt thee and againſt thy two Friends, for ye have not ſpoken of me the thing that is Right, as my Servant* Job. And they are commanded to make uſe of *Job* as an Interceſſour for them, that they *might not be dealt with according to their Folly.* To *cenſure* a Saint is *ill*, but to cenſure him *in Affliction*, and *only becauſe of Affliction* is *worſe*, becauſe this *adds* ſo much to his Affliction.

3. There is *no ground or reaſon for impatience in the Saints, whatever Afflictions are their Exerciſe.* It may be a check to impatience, to conſider, the very *beſt* have deſerved *worſe a thouſandfold*, than ever they have ſuffered, but the moſt effectual Remedy againſt Impatience, is the Conſideration of the Profit of Affliction. Why ſhould Saints repine and murmur at that which is ſo good for them? When their Father is humbling, purifying, and healing of them; when he is carrying on the good Work begun in them, towards greater Perfection; why ſhould they count themſelves hardly dealt with? The *Father of Spirits*, is not like the *Fathers of our Fleſh*, Will and Humour

appears

appears in *their* Corrections; but He gives not a *blow*, but what is for his *Childrens Profit*. Heb. 12. 10. And why ſhould any be impatient at their being Profited and Advantaged? Conſidering the bleſſed iſſue of the Saints Troubles; they ſhould be born with *all thankfulneſs*; for ſanctified Afflictions are *great Promotions*, and hereby *mighty advances* are made in *Heavens way*.

4. 'Tis unreaſonable for the Saints, *becauſe of their Afflictions to queſtion Divine Providence, or to conclude that Religion is vain.* The Pſalmiſt under the *Rod* and *Temptation* together, was ready to draw ſuch Concluſions. *Continued chaſtning* made him to *think of God*, and *to ſpeak* of *Religion unbecomingly* and indeed *impiouſly*. He was ſo *foiled* by the Tempter, *that his Feet were almoſt gone*; and 'twas hard for him to recover; ſtrange kind of Language he utters, *Pſal.* 73. 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. *Therefore his People return hither, and Waters of a full Cup are wrung out to them. And they ſay how doth God know, and is there Knowledge in the moſt high? Behold theſe are the ungodly, who proſper in the World, they increaſe in Riches; Verily I have cleanſed my Heart in vain and waſht my hands in Innocency; for all the day long have I been plagued and chaſtned every Morning.*

But at length the Pſalmiſt *comes to himſelf*, V. 15. *If I ſay, I will ſpeak thus: behold I ſhould offend againſt the Generation of thy Children.* And he

he gives himſelf *very bad Words*, but ſuch as his yielding ſo far to that Temptation *very well deſerved*. V. 21, 22. *Thus my Heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my Reins; ſo fooliſh was I and ignorant: I was as a beaſt before thee.* But he is *cured* of his *brutiſhneſs*, and ſpeaks like a Saint, expreſſing *deſires after God* above *all things in Heaven and Earth*; concludes it *good to draw near* to God, and *rejoices* in him as the *Strength of his Heart* and his *Portion for ever*.

Suppoſe a Saint never ſo much afflicted; yet to *be*, and *continue* a Saint, is certainly *good* for him, and a *wiſe part* in him. *Job* when ſitting upon the ground *among the Aſhes*, full *of Boyls*, and *Scraping himſelf with a Potſheard*, was ſtill dear to God. And ſo was *Lazarus lying at the Rich mans* Gate; deſiring to be fed *with the Crumbs which fell from the Rich mans Table*. Saints under the greateſt Troubles *can't be miſerable*; for *God* is *Theirs*, and *They* are *His* ſtill; and theſe very Troubles do promote their Holineſs and their Happineſs.

5. The *Proſperity of the Wicked, and their Freedom from Affliction, ſhould not raiſe the Saints Envy*. Saints are frequently tempted to envy the wicked their good things, and ſometimes *this Envy has prevailed*, and has been their fault and failing; it has proved their great both *Sin* and *Torment*, *Pſal.* 73. 3. *I was Envious at the Fooliſh, when I ſaw the Proſperity of the Wicked*. That Caution

is

is but needful, *Pſal.* 37. 1. *Fret not thy ſelf becauſe of evil doers, neither be thou envious at the Workers of Iniquity.* For a man that is made *wiſe to Salvation*, to be envious at the *Fooliſh*; for a man that is *enriched with Grace*, to be envious at the *Workers of Iniquity*, becauſe of their Proſperity; there is *no Reaſon* at all for it. Alas! this Proſperity of theirs is greatly to their *Prejudice*, and helps forward their Perdition, *Prov.* 1. 32. *The turning away* or the *eaſe* of the *ſimple ſhall ſlay them, and the Proſperity of Fools ſhall deſtroy them.* And this Deſtruction is *haſtning*, and comes *unexpectedly*, *ſuddenly*, and ſo the more *unavoidably* upon them, and 'twil be *utter* and *Eternal* Deſtruction, *Pſal.* 73. 17, 18, 19. *Until I went into the Sanctuary of God, then underſtood I their End. Surely thou didſt ſet them in ſlippery places, thou caſteſt them down into Deſtruction: How are they brought into Deſolation as in a Moment, they are utterly conſumed with terrours!*

The greateſt Wealth and Glory of the Ungodly; conſidering how *ſoon 'twill end*, and *what* will *follow when it ends*; ſhould not *ſtir our Envy*, but rather our *Pitty and Compaſſion*; for they walk in a *vain ſhew* full of *vain Confidence*, till their *Feet go down to Death*; *and their ſteps take hold of Hell.*

6. To be *Incorrigible under Affliction is inexcuſable.* As 'tis good for Saints to be afflicted, ſo all *ſhould* be *bettered* by Affliction. 'Tis a great Aggra-

Aggravation of Sin to *ſmart* and *bleed* and *groan*, becauſe of it, and yet *ſtill to Love* it. If Saints are afflicted for their Good; when *Sinners* are *afflicted*, a *great price* is put into their hands, which may be improved to an Eternal Advantage. In Proſperity, the Ungodly are uſually hardned in Pride and Earthlineſs, and Wickedneſs, and Senſuality; the Lord not rebuking them, nor *preſently executing Sentence againſt their Evil Works*, they are apt *to think* Him *altogether ſuch an one as themſelves*. Pſal. 50. 21. and that *he diſlikes* Sin no more than *they* do. Whereupon *their Hearts are fully ſet in them to do Evil*, Eccleſ. 8. 11.

But when wicked Ones are viſited with Troubles, and they feel the ſmart of the Rod; God is really very near them; and if they would but cry to him with their Hearts; how readily would he hear and turn them to himſelf, and turn his anger away from them! *Jer.* 31. 18. *I have ſurely heard* Ephraim *bemoaning himſelf thus*; *Thou haſt chaſtiſed me, and I was chaſtiſed; as a Bullock unaccuſtomed to the Yoak; turn thou me and I ſhall be turned, for thou art the Lord my God.* And according to his deſire, he was *turned* and *inſtructed*, he obtained ſure Mercy, and became a *dear Son*, a *pleaſant Child*, notwithſtanding all his former foul Sins and *reproachful Abominations*, V. 19, 20. But when Sinners are ſmitten in vain; and receive no Correction: Nay like *Ahaz* in their Affliction *treſpaſs yet more*; this Argues *a great Love to Sin*:

and

and the *more* provokes the Lord to *Jealousie and Indignation*. *Judah* was strangely fond of, and wedded to their Idolatry and other Wickedness, when the *Sores Judgments* could not be a *means to divorce* them from it, *Jer.* 5. 3. *O Lord are not thine Eyes upon the Truth? Thou hast smitten them, but they have not grieved, thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive Correction, they have made their Faces harder than a Rock, they have refused to return.* 'Tis the *highth* of *Madness* to be *Sins Martyrs*, and not only to suffer trouble in this World; but for the sake of it, to *venture burning* in Hell for evermore!

7. How great is *the goodness of God, who can make the Evil of Affliction to Work for good to his People!* 'Tis the Physicians great art so to temper Poyson, as to turn it into a powerful and wholesom Medicine. What is *Evil* in it *self*, and evil, and *Destructive to Nature*, God does make it become *very good* to the Saints, and to *further the work of Grace* in them. How securely may such a Gracious God be relied on! who can make the *worst things*, a Saint meets with in this World, to prove *Helps and Advantages!* This goodness of God is firmly to be believed, admired, and confided in; and considering the greatness and freeness of it, too much cannot be expected from it. Much of it is manifested, and *laid out* at present, and *much more is laid up* for the Saints in the other World, *Psal.* 31. 19. *Oh how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them*

them that fear thee, which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the Sons of Men! If the goodness of God turns *Evil* into *Good*; what may be expected from the *good things* he gives his People! how *much good shall they do them!* how beneficial shall the *Ministry of the Word*, Holy *Ordinances*; and the *Priviledges of the Sanctuary* prove to the Saints! *Psal.* 65. 4. *Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy Courts; we shall be satisfied with the goodness of thy House even of thy Holy Temple.*

8. Saints are *exceedingly culpable and to be blamed, when after Affliction they decline, instead of growing better.* It argues Corruption very strong when Affliction does not purge it out. *Folly* is but *too fast bound up* in the Heart; that the *Rod of God* does not *drive it* away. Gods *Love* is accompanied with *Jealousie*; let Saints therefore *be jealous of themselves*, lest after Affliction their Hearts deal treacherously and prove unstedfast.

Good *Hezekiah* was *Sick*, and had the *Sentence of Death* pronounced upon him; but he falls a *praying hard*, and *weeping sore*; his Tears *deorsum fluunt, sed cælum petunt*, fell to the Ground, but Heaven is affected at shedding of them. He is *heard*, he is *spared*, he is *healed*; and *brought into the House of God*, when he expected to have *been carried to the Grave*. And such a *Sign* was given him, to assure him of going to the Tem-

ple; as amazed the World, the *Sun* in the Firmament went *so many degrees backward*. Now how much *Faith, Humility, Gratitude, Obedience*, might have been *expected* from so *good a man*, to whom such singular goodness had been manifested! But Alas! *Hezekiah rendred not again according to the Benefit done to him, for his Heart was lifted up; therefore there was wrath upon him, and upon* Judah *and* Jerusalem, 2 *Chron.* 32. 25. His *Riches and Honour*, which he had in *abundance* might puff him up; and the thought of that *Sign*, which declared him a *special favourite of Heaven*, as he supposed; unto the *King of* Babylon, might also make his Heart to *swell* within him.

No Saint that is Wise, will be Self-confident; for after the removal of Affliction, there is great danger of Security and Backsliding; Self-jealousie therefore, and a sense of natural impotency, and unfaithfulness to our selves, should make us cry to be *upheld by Him*, who is of *Power to establish us*. If Saints *receive not Correction*; how soon may they be *taken in hand* and *again lashed*! And their not profiting by the Rod, fills *Satans Mouth* with *Accusations* against them; and their own *Consciences* with *Reproaches*; Gods *displeasure* grows *hotter*, and more *smarting blows* may be expected, *Lev.* 26. 23, 24. *And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me; then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your Sins.*

USE

USE II. Of Advice to more *Notorious Sinners*, whose scandalous Lives witness to the badness of their State; and by their constant *Evil Works* they shew they are *Children that have no Faith*; or if their Sin be not so apparent to others, 'tis apparent to themselves; Conscience, if they would but heed it, charges them with *secret wickedness*, which is committed with great *Presumption and Boldness*. If such as these, are seized upon by *Sickness*, or feel any other smarting Rod; I would give them such Advice, as if it be followed, their Affliction will have a good issue and effect upon them, as bad as they are.

1. When Affliction overtakes you, that are very wicked; *Take notice how your Sin has found you out.* That threatning, *Num.* 32. 23. is accomplished. *Ye have sinn'd against the Lord, and be sure your Sin will find you out.* It has been *hunting* you, with *Evils* at the *heels* of it; and now it has actually overtaken you. You dream't not of this in the hour of Temptation, when Sin was represented to you by your subtle Enemy, as all *Gain and Pleasure*; Affliction shews the Misery it has brought you to; and that 'tis full of Gall and Wormwood. Thus Sin found out *Judah* of old, *Jer.* 2. 19. *Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee; know therefore and see that it is an evil thing and bitter, that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God, and that my fear is not in thee, saith the Lord God of Hosts.*

Sin *your Enemy* has *found* you; and you feel to your Coſt and Wo, that it is an Enemy indeed. *Wickedneſs* was once *ſweet in your Mouths*, and you did *hide it under your Tongue*; you *ſpared it* and would by no means *forſake it*; but now in your *Bowels 'tis turned*, and is the *very Gall of Aſps within you*, Job 20. 12, 13, 14.

2. Behold you that are wicked, *how God is come forth in anger againſt you*; there is a Rod in his hand, frowns in his face; and he is full of juſt Indignation againſt you. And who *can ſtand before that Indignation*? Nah. 1. 2. *God is Jealous, and the Lord Revengeth; the Lord Revengeth and is furious; the Lord will take Vengeance on his Adverſaries, and reſerveth wrath for his Enemies.* Such *Potſheards* of the Earth as, the ſtrongeſt and ſtouteſt Sinners of you all, are; cannot ſtand before *your Maker*, when he is Contending with you, *Ezek.* 22. 14. *Can thy Heart endure, or can thy hands be ſtrong, when I ſhall deal with thee?* If the *Wrath of a King*, be as the *Meſſenger of Death*: What is the anger of Him, *who is the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords*, who does *what he will, in the Army of Heaven and among the Inhabitants of the Earth, and none can ſtay his hand, or ſay to him, What doſt thou? ſince all the Inhabitants of the World are reputed as nothing before him*, Dan. 4. 35.

This Anger of God has Almighty and Irreſiſtible Strength joined with it, and therefore 'tis very

ry terrible, *Pſal.* 90. 11. *Who knows the Power of thine Anger? even according to thy Fear, ſo is thy Wrath.* Though there be never ſo much fear and dread of God in the Hearts of any; the Anger of God, if ready to fall upon them, deſerves all that fear; the *Devils believe* and feel this wrath, and are apprehenſive of its continuance and increaſe, therefore *they tremble*, Jam. 2. 20. See O Sinner, that the glorious and dreadful Majeſty of Heaven and Earth, is angry with *Thee in Particular.* Thou *art the man*, who haſt *bitterly provoked* him. *Thy Iniquities are hateful to him.* Now if God is not at all taken notice of; if his anger is not at all minded; nor any courſe or care taken to appeaſe it; it will be blown up to the greater fierceneſs, and this fire may quickly devour, conſume; and having begun with thee, make a ſpeedy and utter end of thee.

3. It concerns you to *fear Him, under whoſe Power you are*, and who is able to deſtroy *both the Body and the Soul* likewiſe, *Luk.* 12. 4, 5. *And I ſay unto you my Friends, Be not afraid of them, that kill the Body, and after that have no more that they can do; But I will forewarn you, whom you ſhall fear; fear him who after he hath killed, hath Power to caſt into Hell, yea, I ſay unto you, fear him.* His hands did make that *Earthly Houſe* of your Tabernacle; and he can bring it *to the duſt again.* Your Souls, he can require when he pleaſes, and if you dye in your Sins, your Souls will be doom'd to the place, where other damned

Spirits are; and they are loſt beyond all hopes and poſſibility of recovery. Oh! *ſanctifie the Lord of Hoſts, in whoſe hand* you *are, under whoſe hand* you *groan*; by *making him your fear and dread*; he can command both *firſt* and *ſecond death* to ſeize on you, *Rev.* 6. 8. *And I looked and behold a Pale Horſe, and his Name that ſate on him was Death, and Hell followed with him.* Death is the *King of Terrors*, but *Hell* is ten thouſand times *more terrible*. Oh! be afraid of that mighty hand, which with *one blow* can both *kill and damn* you together. You cannot ſecure your ſelves by *Hiding*, by *Flight*, or by *Reſiſtance*; for Gods *Eye is all-ſeeing*, his Power and Hand is irreſiſtible, and extends it ſelf, all *Heaven and Earth and Hell over*; therefore humbling your ſelves, and Submiſſion, would be the beſt and wiſeſt way that you can take.

4. In this ill Caſe in which you are, *remember now your evil ways, and your doings that have not been good*, Ezek. 36. 31. *Then ſhall ye remember your evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and ſhall loath your ſelves in your own ſight for your Iniquities and Abominations.* Your remembring of your Tranſgreſſions, is one way to have God forget them; loath your ſelves, and he will not loath you; condemning your ſelves, is the way not to be condemned by him. *Humble your ſelves in the ſight of the Lord, and he will lift you up*, Jam. 4. 10. Oh ſmite upon your thighs and ſay, *What have we done?* How *manifold* are our Tranſgreſſions! How *mighty* are our Sins! What *guilt* have

have we incurr'd! How *monſtrouſly black and foul* are our *Defilements!* What *wrath* have we provoked! How *hot and low* a place in Hell have we *deſerved!* Innumerable *Evils compaſs us about; our Iniquities have taken hold upon us, ſo that we are not able to look up; they are more than the Hairs of our Heads, therefore our Hearts fail us.* Pſal. 40. 12. See how *deceitful polluting* and *damnable* the Nature of Sin is; call your ſelves by the right Name, *Fools; foes to your ſelves; Self-murtherers and Self-deſtroyers;* in giving way to Iniquity. Be utterly *diſpleaſed* with your ſelves for ſinning againſt God, and wronging your own Souls; and *fall out* with *all ſin* for ever.

5. Be *Inquiſitive what you muſt do to be ſaved?* You that are *outwardly afflicted,* and alſo *prickt in the Heart,* and *wounded in your Conſciences;* ſhould very ſeriouſly inquire whether the *door of Hope* be not *yet open* to you, and what courſe you muſt take to be *ſaved from Sin and Wrath,* and to have your *Peace with God made.* Indeed the Lord ſpeaks confoundingly and terribly to wicked men in their Calamity, *Prov.* 1. 26, 27, 28, 29. *I will laugh at your Calamity, and will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as Deſolation, and Deſtruction as a Whirlwind, when Diſtreſs and Anguiſh cometh upon you; then ſhall they call upon me, but I will not Anſwer: They ſhall ſeek me early, but they ſhall not find me: for that they hated Knowledg, and did not chuſe the fear of the Lord.* And do you acknowledge that the Lord

might justly speak such Language to *you*; but withal know, that these distressed Sinners, had these *cries extorted* from them *meerly* by Calamity; but had *no desire* to be *turned from their Iniquities.* Therefore you that are brought very low by Affliction, do not only cry to God to *deliver you* from your trouble; but that he *would also purge away your Sins for his Name sake.* Psal. 79. 9. And let not your Disconsolate Spirits doubt; for *there is hope* in *Israel* concerning you, *Psal.* 130. 7, 8. *Let* Israel *hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there is Mercy, and with him is plenteous Redemption, and he will redeem* Israel *from all his Iniquities.*

6. Look upon God as *accessible, and reconcileable in a Mediator, who is his beloved Son the Lord Jesus. Christ has suffered once for Sins, the just for the unjust that he might bring men to God,* 1 Pet. 3. 18. *And God is in Christ reconciling the World to himself, not imputing their Trespasses to them,* 2 Cor. 5. 19. *Now then,* saith the Apostle, *We are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christs stead be ye reconciled to God.* God is *more forward* to be at Peace with you, then *you are aware.* He *intreats* you to accept of that *Pardon,* which you desire, and so much need, but *fear you shall not obtain*; and if you value his favour in Christ, and intreat it with your whole Heart; you shall *not die* under his *Displeasure, Psal.* 119. 58. *I intreated thy favour with my whole*

whole Heart; be merciful to me according to thy Word.

Are you willing upon *any terms* to have the breach made up between God and you? Do you consent to *be* any thing, to *do* any thing, to *part with* any thing which he would have you; so *you* may be but *His*, and *He Yours*; a God in Covenant with you; and a Father to you? Then let your drooping Hearts revive, for *there is an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, who is the Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World*, 1 Joh. 2. 1, 2. His *Blood speaks better things than that of* Abel; cries louder for Mercy, than your Sin can cry for Vengeance. Here you may *safely venture your Faith*, for Christs Blood is the Blood of him, *who is God* as well as man; and he is able to reconcile God and Men together, and those men who have been never so much *alienated and Enemies in their Minds by Reason of wicked Works*, Col. 1. 21. In your Affliction be sensible of Gods anger; and readily grant the justness of it; but do not look upon it, as *not to be appeased*. If you come to him by Jesus Christ, you will find his Fury all gone, *Isa.* 27. 4, 5. *Fury is not in me; let him take hold of my Strength, that he may make Peace with me, and he shall make Peace with me.*

7. Pray to be *turned from Sin it self; as well as have the afflicting hand of God removed.* 'Tis an ill thing *to chuse Iniquity rather than Affliction*, Job

Job 36. 21. Many under Sickness, cry to have *bodily Health* restored, but the Diseases of their Souls they feel not; neither is the *health of the Soul* valued. Many a man in Affliction and Pain, does call upon God, saying, *Lord heal my Body!* but he was a man after Gods own Heart, who said, *Lord be merciful to me, heal my Soul for I have sinned against thee,* Psal. 41. 4. *Pharaoh* cried to be delivered from the *Plagues of* Egypt; but not from the *hardness* of his Heart, neither did he desire to fear the Name of God; if he had; both his Drowning and Damnation might have been prevented. You who are afflicted, I grant, may pray for the *sparing of your Lives*; with Submission to the Will of God; and that *his stroke may be removed* away from you. The Psalmist prays for both, *Psal.* 39. 10, 13. *Remove thy stroke away from me, I am consumed by the blow of thy hand. O spare me, that I may recover Strength before I go away from hence, and be no more*: But before, he had prayed, that he might be *delivered from Sin*; for this was the greatest Evil, *Ver.* 7, 8. *And now Lord what wait I for? my Hope is in Thee; deliver me from all my Transgressions.* This he Hopes, this he Longs, this he Waits upon God for; that he might be deliver'd from his Transgressions, not *some* only but from *all* of them, that neither the *guilt of Sin* might *lie* upon him, nor *any Iniquity* have the *Dominion* over him.

You that have lived wickedly, and God is rebuking

buking of you with the blows of his hand; have great cause to be *Self-suspicious* least all your *Religion* and *Devotion at present*, be onely *forced*; by what you *feel* and *fear*: You had need therefore to beg that a *thorow* and *lasting change* may be wrought in your Hearts, or else your *hot fit* of Religion will quickly be off; *Your goodness will be as the Morning Cloud, and as the early Dew, so it will go away*, Hos. 6. 4. Oh cry for the Sanctifying Spirit, that he may *dwell in* you *continually*; and *Consecrate you as Temples*, for himself to abide in; and *cause* you to walk in the *Laws* and *Ways* of the Lord unto the very end.

And if You that are Notorious Sinners are spared; and God does *send his Word and heal you*, and deliver you from the *Pit of Destruction*. I would farther advise you in these following particulars.

1. Think with your selves, if *Affliction had carried you off in your Sins* into another World; whither Oh! whither had you gone? At Death all Souls are disposed of in the place which they are *fit* for. Holy Souls are made *meet to be partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light*, and when separated from the Body, they enter upon that Inheritance. The Souls of the Wicked were continually *fitting themselves for Destruction*; at Death they are *ripe* for it, and are *thrown* into it. The Wicked who die in their Sins, what a woful place are they turned into! *Psal.* 9. 17.

The

The Wicked shall be turned into Hell, and all the Nations that forget God. That Rich and sensual *Israelite*, who called *Abraham Father*, but chose the Pleasures of Sin for a season, before Righteousness and Life Eternal; what became of him? After Death, the next News we hear of him was this; He *was in Hell*, he *sees Heaven afar off*, *too far* for him *ever to Hope* to *come thither*. He saw too late, what he had mist of; and how *hot* and *unquenchable* were the *Flames* in which he was tormented! *Luk.* 16. 23, 24. Oh! Sinner, if thou hadst died in thy Wickedness and Enmity against God, thou hadst been dealt withal as an Enemy; sent away with a Curse into Everlasting Fire; without Hopes of Reconciliation or Release.

2. Admire the *Patience and Goodness of God towards you.* You burthen'd him with your Iniquities, 'tis a wonder he did not ease himself of the Load; that, that Word did not take hold of you, *Isa.* 1. 24. *Ah! I will ease me of my Adversaries, and avenge me of my Enemies.* He might have glorified his Righteousness, Purity, Power, and Truth, in your just Condemnation and Misery; but he has pitied and spared you; and *still waits to be Gracious.* Now do not shew your selves *such rebels*, as neither *Severity* nor *Goodness* will *overcome*, as neither *fair* means, nor *foul* will *work upon* and *better.* Do not Act, as if you were *delivered to work Abomination.* Though the Patience of God be wonderful, yet

'tis

'tis not *Eternal*, and when *abusing* it, brings it to *an end*; the following *Fury* is dreadful to the *Abusers*.

3. Remember, the *Sparing of you is owing to the Lord Jesus*. He interceeds that the *fruitless Fig-tree may be spared*, and *tried* a little longer; and how *well* will it be, if at length it bring forth fruit which is good. Whatever Deliverances and Salvation wicked men partake of; Christ is the Author of them, for he is affirmed to be σωτηρ πάντων ἀνθρώπων the Saviour of all men, though μάλιστα πιστῶν especially of them that believe, 1 *Tim.* 4. 10. And as the Lord Redeemer has interceded for your sparing, so he offers a *far greater Benefit if* you *will accept it*; to *make Peace* for you, to work *true Grace* in you, to *Open your Eyes and to turn you from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan to God, that you may receive forgiveness of Sins, and an Inheritance among them that are Sanctified by Faith which is in Him*, Act. 26. 18.

4. Be sure to Sin *no more Presamptuously, least a worse thing come next*, Joh. 5. 14. Jesus found the man whom he had healed *in the Temple*, a *proper place*, after his *recovery* to be found in, and he saith to him. *Behold, thou art made whole, Sin no more, least a worse thing come to thee*. If after the return of health, and the removal of the Rod, you *turn away from the Holy Commandment delivered to you*; *and it happens to you according*

according to the Proverb, *The Dog is turned to his own vomit again, and the Sow that was washed to her wallowing in the Mire.* You becoming worse than ever, and more inexcusable than ever in being so; worse than ever from Gods hand is to be expected. Greater Distress may quickly seize you; and the loudest cries may have a deaf Ear turned to them, *Psal.* 18. 41. *They cried but there was none to save, even to the Lord, but he answered them not.* That may be the Lords Determination concerning you, *Ezek.* 8. 18. *Therefore will I also deal in fury, mine Eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, and though they cry in my Ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them.*

Though Gods hand be off from you, remember he can quickly lay it on again; and it may be so heavy, as to make you fall under it. See what is threatned to the tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, *Mat.* 3. 10. *And now also the Ax is laid to the Root of the Trees, therefore every Tree, which bringeth not forth good Fruit is hewen down and cast into the Fire:* And if this bringing forth no good Fruit brings the Tree to Everlasting burning, what fierce Flames, will burn those Trees, which bring forth a great deal of bad Fruit? Such as you read of, *Deut.* 32. 32, 33. *For their Vine is of the Vine of Sodom, and of the Fields of Gomorrah; their Grapes are Grapes of Gall, their Clusters are bitter, their Wine is the Poyson of Dragons, and the cruel Venom of Asps.*

To

To go on in Sin, after recovery from Sickneſs may ſhorten your days, and make *Sentence againſt you to be ſpeedily executed.*

5. Though *Death is a little delayed, yet it will certainly and quickly come*; let it not *find you unprepared.* Heb. 9. 27. *It is appointed unto men once to dye; and after this the Judgment.* And this appointment is concerning *you*, as well as others. Therefore ſpeak every one of you, as *Job* did, *Job* 30. 23. *For I know that thou wilt bring me to Death, and to the Houſe appointed for all the living.* 'Tis not more certain you *are alive*, than 'tis certain, that you *ſhall ſhortly die.* And wo to you if you *lie ſtill*, and at laſt *die* in your *Wickedneſs.* If *Sin* be the *ſting of Death*, then ſo *many Sins* as you have been guilty of, ſo *many ſtings* will *your Death* have. A *King of Terrors* indeed it will be found; when with ſo many ſtings 'tis *armed*! Pray hard that a *ſaving change* may be wrought *in Heart and Life*, before the *great change* come; and that you may *paſs from Death to Life* in a *Spiritual Senſe*, before in a *Natural Senſe* you paſs from Life to *Death.*

USE III. Of *Direction* more *generally unto all*; and here I ſhall direct you,

How to carry it *under Affliction.*

And

And likewise how *after Affliction*; that you may receive much good by Affliction.

In the first place, I am to direct you, how to carry it under Affliction.

1. Under Affliction *be perswaded and take great notice that* God himself *is come to visit you.* Though he be not the Author of sin, yet *Penal Evils* are *all* from him; chastning is called the *Chastning of the Lord*, Heb. 12. 5. Chastisements are stiled *his rebukes.* His Providence is so extensive, that not a *Sparrow falls to the ground without Him.* Nothing then befalls any of the Children of men; but by Divine Appointment. Fix your Eyes therefore upon God. He has taken you in hand, and out of his hand none can rescue you; and the *wound* that is made, will remain uncured; till the *same* hand *heal*, which *gave* it, *Job* 9 13. *If God will not withdraw his anger, the Proud helpers do stoop under him.* The *Chaldeans* were the *Ax*; but Gods hand *hewed Israel* with it; they were the *Saw*, but Gods hand did *shake* it. And when you see, 'tis really God himself that visits you in Severity; behave your selves as *Creatures ought* to do towards their *Creator*; who is infinitely *above* them; has been *greatly offended* by them; can easily *crush* them; and yet is able and ready upon Humiliation to *cure* them.

If

If the *Invisible God*, who corrects, were more eyed in all the ſtrokes he gives you; this would have a mighty Efficacy to *abaſe* you before him, and to make Affliction *attain* its *end* upon you, that an *end might be put* to your Affliction.

2. Under Affliction, *Juſtifie God, and accept the Puniſhment of your Iniquity*; in Affliction *Conſcience* may ſpeak very *plain and home*, and ſo as that you have nothing to reply; and the *Spirit of God* may ſet in with Conſcience, and make its *charge* more *unanſwerable*. Heedfully liſten to Conſcience, and Mind the *Convictions* of the Spirit. *Oh ſearch and try your ways*, the ways that your *Hearts and Affections* have gone; as well as the Paths you have broken with *your Feet*. Be better acquainted with the *evil nature* of your own ways, and their pernicious and deſtructive Tendency. Lay *blame* where it *ought* to be laid, upon an *evil Heart* eſpecially; for that's the fruitful womb, in which Sin is *conceived*, that *brings forth* all the Evils, wherewith the *man is defiled*. 'Tis the Evil Heart, which *through unbelief departs from the Living God*; and is inclined to *dead works, and lying Vanities*.

Fail not to *clear the Juſtice of God*, as it is written, *That thou mighteſt be juſtified in thy ſayings, and mighteſt overcome, when thou art judged*, Rom. 3. 4. Judge likewiſe and condemn *your*

 ſelves,

ſelves, and your *Sin* as the meritorious cauſe of all your Sorrows and Sufferings. Never look upon Sin, but behold the *long train* of Evils that follow after it; and if you were not deliver'd from Sin it ſelf, this train of Evils would run *Parallel* with *Eternity*. God requires the *Heart ſhould be humbled*, and accept the *Puniſhment of its Iniquity*. The Heart muſt firmly believe that Sin is that, whereat God is diſpleaſed; that Sin is the procuring Cauſe of all other Evils that are felt, and that the true Reaſon of Gods Controverſie, is *becauſe, even becauſe* his *Word and Commandments* have been caſt behind the back, *deſpiſed and broken*, Levit. 26. 41, 43.

3. Under Affliction, be *ſenſible of the Plagues of your own Hearts*; and *Conſent* with *Earneſt Deſire* to have them *preſently and throughly healed*. The Sickneſs and Periſhing of the outward man, is for the *reſtoring the inward man* to Health. The Humours, and Appetites, and Inclinations of the Body, are an occaſion of much Sin in the Soul; which ſhould make you the more contented, that the *Fleſh* ſhould be *diſeaſed*, and *pained*, and *ready to periſh*, that the *Spirit may be healed*, and *ſaved in the day of the Lord Jeſus*. Corporal Diſeaſes, attain not their end, unleſs they make you ſenſible of *Spiritual* Maladies. Is thy Head, thy Breaſt, thy Back, or any part of thy Body out of Order? preſently look with a *diligent ſearch* into thy *own Heart*, to know what *that ailes*; that there may be the more ſerious and

ſpeedy

ſpeedy Application to the great Phyſician of Souls.

Ephraim when chaſtized was ſenſible of the *ſtubbornneſs* of corrupted Nature, and its *backwardneſs to come under the Yoak of God.* I was ſays he, as a *Bullock unaccuſtomed to the Yoak*, and he prays not ſo much for the *removal of the Rod*, as for *Grace* that might *Convert him* unto *God*, who did *correct him.* Afflictions are *Spiritual Medicines* much made uſe of by the Lord *who heals his People.* Sick-beds are the places where he *Works great cures*; when the *Face is Pale*, when the *Pulſe beats diſorderly*, when the *Blood is boiling hot*, and the whole Body in a *Flame*, and the frame of Nature ſeems juſt ready to be diſſolved; all this has a mighty Influence unto the *Souls Healthineſs and Proſperity.* How are *dreggs* then purged out, and how *Pure*, *Humble*, and *Heavenly minded* is the Heart then!

4. Under Affliction, *deſire Inſtruction, and that you may learn all the Leſſons, which the Rod is ſent to teach you.* You are commanded to *hear* the *Rod*, Mic. 6. 9. *The Lords Voice cryeth unto the City, and the Man of Wiſdom ſhall ſee thy Name; hear ye the Rod and who hath appointed it.* The Rod has a Voice, and 'tis ſtrong and ſtartling; if you will but heed it, it will be very articulate and plain to you. Chaſtning is truly *beatifical*, makes the chaſtized bleſſed, when the Lord does chaſtize and teach together, or gives

Inſtruction with and *by* Correction, *Pſal.* 94. 12. *Bleſſed is the man, whom thou chaſteneſt O Lord, and teacheſt him out of thy Law.* When the Schoolmaſter has a Rod in his hand, has given ſeveral Laſhes, and is ready upon neglects and new faults to give more; how does the Scholar mind every Word his Maſter ſpeaks to him! with what Care and Diligence is his Leſſon learned! The Rod of God ſhould quicken Attention to his Voice, and cauſe a moſt ſerious regard to his whole Will and Pleaſure.

Is the Leſſon of the Rod concerning *thy Pride*? 1 *Pet.* 5. 5. *Be cloathed with Humility, for God reſiſteth the Proud, but giveth Grace to the Humble.* Is the Leſſon of the Rod concerning thy *Love to the World*? 1 Joh. 2. 15. *Love not the World, neither the things that are in the World; if any man love the World, the love of the Father is not in him.* Is the Leſſon of the Rod concerning *thy Sloth*? Heb. 6. 12. *That ye be not ſlothful, but followers of them who through Faith and Patience inherit the Promiſes.* Is the Leſſon of the Rod concerning thy *fooliſh fleſhly and hurtful Luſts*? 1 Pet. 2. 11. *Dearly beloved, I beſeech you as Strangers and Pilgrims, abſtain from fleſhly Luſts which war againſt the Soul.* Finally, Is the Leſſon of the Rod concerning thy *unruly Paſſions*? Prov. 14. 29. *He that is ſlow to wrath is of great underſtanding, but he that is haſty of Spirit exalteth Folly.* So that 'tis very viſible and expoſed to the view of all, *Jam.* 1. 20. *The Wrath of*

man

man worketh not the Righteousness of God. Eph. 4. 31, 32. *Let all bitterness and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice; and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another; even as God for Christs sake hath forgiven you.* Whatever the Lesson of the Rod be; let it be your care to be *throughly* instructed in it; and *practise* in those who have *learned to purpose.*

5. Under Affliction, *sincerely turn and seek to that God who smites you.* A thorough Conversion is the end of Correction. Take notice of the false ways in which you have gone astray, and how near you were to the brink of Eternal Perdition; venture not to take so much *as one step* farther, in *Hells Road.* But return to God unfeignedly and with your *whole Heart.* Consent to be *wholly His*; that your *whole man* should be at *his Command*, and have respect to *all* his Precepts without Exception, *Psal.* 119. 5, 6. *Oh that my ways were directed to keep thy Statutes! then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy Commandments.*

Judah is branded for this, that they *refused to turn* to *him* that *smote them.* No wonder that Gods *anger* did *abide*, and that his hand was still felt very heavy upon them, *Isa.* 9. 12, 13. *For all this his anger is not turned away; but his hand is stretched out still; for this People turneth not to*

him that ſmiteth them, neither do ſeek the Lord of Hoſts. The hand that ſmites you, if you will not turn, can give *worſe blows*; nay it can give a *deadly blow*, that may ſtrike you quite down, both into the *Grave and Hell* together. The hand that ſmites, *alone can heal*, therefore it concerns you to *humble your ſelves* under it.

How great is the *goodneſs of God*, that *he gives you leave* to turn to him! that he *requires you* to ſeek him! and that for no leſs than his *Favour*, his *Grace*, and *Eternal Glory*, and *Bleſſedneſs*! And all this ſhall be yours, if you *ſeek diligently*.

6. Under Affliction, take heed *of deſpiſing the chaſtning of the Lord.* Heb. 12. 5. *Ye have forgotten the Exhortation, that ſpeaketh unto you as unto Children, My Son deſpiſe not thou the chaſtning of the Lord.* Chaſtning is deſpiſed, when the Lords *hand* in chaſtning is not taken notice of, nor his *end* in Correcting is Minded or Complied with; when neither his *diſpleaſure* manifeſted in *rebukes* is obſerved; nor *Sin mourned for*, which does diſpleaſe him. Thus for a while chaſtning was deſpiſed by him, you read of, *Iſa.* 57. 17. *For the Iniquity of his Covetouſneſs was I wroth and ſmote him, I hid me and was wroth, and he went frowardly on in the way of his Heart.* But at laſt he was brought to a better temper. The Lord humbled him, and healed the frowardneſs of his Heart; and likewiſe removed his

his ſtroke from him, *V.* 18. *I have ſeen his ways and will heal him, I will lead him alſo, and reſtore Comfort to him and to his Mourners.*

In Affliction take notice of God as the *Afflicter*, elſe you *contemn* him; take notice of *Sin*, as the cauſe *why* you are afflicted; for if *Sin* be not *laid to Heart*, that *God* whom *you Sin againſt* is diſregarded. Nay Saints in a ſenſe deſpiſe chaſtning, if they *don't behold* that the *Rod* they feel is in their *Fathers hand*, (for the Exhortation, the Apoſtle tells us, ſpeaks *as unto Children*,) and that it is a token of his Paternal Faithfulneſs and Love, *Prov.* 3. 12. *Whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a Father the Son in whom he delighteth.* To look upon Afflictions meerly as evils is to deſpiſe them. They ought to be lookt upon as Arguments of Gods Fatherly Wiſdom and Care; and as *Talents improvable* to great Spiritual Advantage. The *Cup* is in the hand of a *Father*, and all the *Ingredients* in it are *healing*. Every *Member of Chriſt*, therefore ſhould ſpeak that *Language*, which his *Head* ſpake before him, *Joh.* 18. 11. *The Cup which my Father hath given me, ſhall I not drink it?*

7. Under Affliction, *faint not, neither be weary of Correction.* He is infinitely *wiſe* who does correct, and therefore Correction ſhall not be *exceſſive* but in *meaſure*, Jer. 30. 11. *I am with thee, ſaith the Lord to ſave thee, I will not make a full end of thee, but will correct thee in meaſure*

and not leave thee wholly unpuniſhed. The *meaſure* of Affliction is *ſuch* as he, who is *beſt able to judge*, ſees to be *needful*, and no more; 1 *Pet.* 1. 6. *Now for a ſeaſon if need be, ye are in heavineſs through many Temptations.* God will lighten your burthen; or if he ſhould *add* to your Load, he will *proportion Strength*, that you may be able to bear it. Faint not under his hand, for when he *ſtrikes* he alſo *ſuſtains*, and in *Wrath remembers Mercy.* Be willing that Affliction ſhould remain, till 'tis ſanctified, and has done its work for which 'twas laid upon you. 'Tis ſad, when Affliction goes off without doing any good to the afflicted; when the Rod is like the *firſt King* that *Iſrael* had, *given in Gods Anger, and taken away in his Wrath.*

When the Lord afflicts; his Diſpenſations are *mixed* Checker-work; Black and White; *Goodneſs* and *Severity* together; and there ſhould be a *Mixture* of *Holy Affections* that are *diverſe* one from the other, anſwerably in your Hearts. This is notably repreſented by *one* of our *Engliſh Poets*, and his Verſes have a great deal of Senſe and Direction in them.

Herberts Bitter-ſweet. *P.* 165.

Ah my dear angry Lord,
Since thou doſt Love yet ſtrike;
Caſt down yet help afford;
Sure I will do the like.
I will complain the Praiſe;
I will bewail, approve:

And

And all my ſour ſweet days,
I will lament and love.

Be not too eager for the removal of the ſtroke you ſmart under; that removal is but a *common* Mercy; but the *Sanctification* of it, is *peculiar kindneſs*, that which *accompanies Salvation*. If the Plaiſter lies not on long enough, it heals not the Sore; if the Potion be caſt up again, aſſoon as taken down, it works not a cure. *God knows* when *'tis fitteſt* to *remove* your trouble; therefore be *dumb with Silence* and wait with Patience till *the fitteſt time* comes. *David* did ſo, though he was in an *horrible Pit* in the *Miry Clay*, he was not over eager to be pluckt out, but exerciſed Patience, and how Happy was the iſſue! *Pſal.* 40. 1, 2, 3. *I waited patiently for the Lord, and he inclined unto me and heard my cry; he brought me up alſo out of an horrible Pit, out of the Miry Clay, and ſet my Feet upon a Rock and eſtabliſhed my goings. And he hath put a new Song in my Mouth, even Praiſe unto our God; many ſhall ſee it and fear and truſt in the Lord.*

8. Under Affliction, let there be *a moſt profound Subjection to the Father of Spirits, Lights and Mercies.* The Father of Spirits, will take *ſpecial care* of *Souls*; and conſult *their Health* and *Peace*, and *endleſs welfare*. If the Soul be ſafe, the *Body muſt* be *ſafe* in the *ſame Bottom*. The *Body* that belongs to a *ſanctified Soul*, muſt be a *Glorious Body* at the *Reſurrection of the Juſt*.

And

And since the Lord is the *Father of Lights*, you may conclude he *perfectly understands*, what is most *conducive to your Interest*, and what *kind* and *degree* of Affliction, is most expedient and *best* for you; and because he is the *Father of Mercies*; Mercy he *delights* in, as a *man* does in his *own off-spring*; he will deal *tenderly* with you, Mercy shall not be *forgotten* in the *greatest Severity*, *Psal.* 103. 13. *Like as a Father pittieth his Children, so the Lord pittieth them that fear him; for he knoweth our frame and remembreth we are dust.* Subjection to God when he afflicts becomes you, and besides this Subjection is the *way of Life*. Heb. 12. 9. *Furthermore we have had Fathers of our Flesh, who corrected us, and we gave them Reverence; shall we not much rather be in Subjection to the Father of Spirits and live?* Subjection to God is the wisest course to have *temporal Life prolonged*, and liv'd *to purpose*, and *Eternal Life*, at length vouchsafed.

In the *second Place*, I am to direct you how to carry it *after Affliction*; now is a time of great danger, when the Heart is apt to shew both its *Wickedness* and *Deceitfulness* together, and to grow *secure* as if all *Peril were over*; therefore,

1. Keep *alive in your Hearts, the same Apprehensions of things* after *Affliction which you had* under *Affliction*. Things *are* really as they *were*, though we of Sick grow well again, therefore our thoughts

thoughts of them ſhould not alter. The great Truths revealed, and ſo much inſiſted on in the Word of God; in Affliction had deep Impreſſions upon our Spirits. How *clearly* and *concernedly*, did we then perceive, that *Chriſt* is the *onely Saviour*! that *all things* were juſtly to be accounted *loſs* that he might be *gained*! We lookt upon *time* as too *precious* a thing to be ſpent *Idly* or *Wickedly*. The Soul was lookt upon as *more worth* than the *whole World*, and more to be *regarded*; not to be neglected for the Worlds ſake, *Mat.* 16. 26. *What ſhall it profit a man, if he ſhall gain the whole World and loſe his own Soul? or what ſhall a man give in exchange for his Soul?* How did the thoughts of *Eternity* affect our Hearts, when we were in the depth of Affliction! Our Apprehenſions of this Truth were amazing. That all muſt quickly be *in* Eternity, and all muſt be *unto* Eternity, either in *Joy* or *Wo*. Our Conceptions of theſe and ſuch like things, were moſt *rectified* in Affliction; therefore when Affliction is removed, our Judgments ſhould ſtill remain the ſame. The concerns of *another World* ſhould always be eſteemed far greater, than the higheſt concerns of *this*. Serioufneſs well becomes us, in thoſe matters which are of *Everlaſting Conſequence*, where careleſsneſs or miſtake will iſſue in *endleſs* ruine; *underſtanding Diligence* in *Eternal* Happineſs.

2. After Affliction, *be very Jealous over your*

your own Spirits, which are ſo very prone to deal treacherouſly both with God and your ſelves. You are not naturally *truſty to either*; but unfaithful to God, and unfaithful to your own Souls. Hearken how the Lord complains, *Hoſ.* 6. 7. *They like men have tranſgreſſed the Covenant, they have dealt treacherouſly againſt me.* You do not know your *ſelves to be men*, if you don't know your ſelves to *be treacherous*; and ſtrongly inclined to *break* through all *obligations* in Point of *Duty, Gratitude*, and *Intereſt it ſelf*; which you are under: ever ſince the firſt *Adams* Apoſtacy and fall from God, his Poſterity have a vehement Propenſion *to ſtart aſide alike deceitful bowes.*

A notable inſtance of the Hearts treachery in Afflictions, and inſtability upon the removal of it, you have, *Pſal.* 78. 34, 35, 36, 37. *When he ſlew them then they ſought him, they returned and inquired early after God, they remembred that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer; nevertheleſs they did flatter him with their Lips, and lied unto him with their Tongues, for their Heart was not right with him, neither were they ſtedfaſt in his Covenant.* Mens *Reſolutions* in Afflictions, are like *Nautarum Vota*, the *Vows of Marriners* in a Storm, the *firſt things* that are *broken* when once they get *ſafe to Shore.* Be ſure therefore to *check* your hearts and lift them up to God to ſecure them, when *firſt* you perceive

ceive them ſo *much as begin* to *ſtart aſide*. Apoſtacy *begins* in the *Heart*, that does firſt *turn back from God*, then afterwards *the ſteps decline from his ways*; diſtruſting therefore your own Hearts follow *Solomons* Counſel, *Prov.* 4. 23. *And keep them with all diligence*, and unto your own ſtricteſt Vigilancy, add fervent Prayer, that the Lord would make your Hearts *clean Hearts*, and that he would *renew* and keep your *Spirits right* with him, *Pſal.* 51. 10.

3. Cry for *Strength to be vouchſafed continually from above, to perform your Reſolutions made in the day of your Affliction and Diſtreſs.* If you are not *ſtrong in the Lord, and in the Power of his might*, you will be too *weak to do*, what your ſelves with the *greateſt firmneſs* have ſeem'd to *purpoſe*. And you muſt pray hard, and 'tis worth praying for, that this *Power* may reſt upon you. The Pſalmiſt ſaw his need of Strength from Heaven, he begg'd for it, and had it, *Pſal.* 138. 3. *In the day, when I cried thou anſweredſt me, and ſtrengthnedſt me with ſtrength in my Soul.*

There are *two* ſorts of Reſolutions which are *moſt commonly made*, but neither of them are kept; ſo as the *Reſolvers* thought they would be. Reſolutions meerly to *ſtop* and *gag* the Mouth of a *clamorous Conſcience*; and Reſolutions which are made in *mens own ſtrength*, who *Queſtion* not, *nor trouble their Heads* much about,

about, their *Ability* and *Integrity* to perform them. These Resolutions shews their falshood, and fickleness; and how *bold men* are to *dissemble* with God; and how fooliſh in *trusting* and *cheating* themselves.

But the *Religious Purposes* of the Psalmist were of another Nature, in another manner. He is indeed very serious and *Peremptory* in his Resolution, and confirmed it with *a Promissory Oath*; *Psal.* 119. 106. *I have sworn and I will perform it, that I will keep thy Righteous Judgments.* But he is sensible, that neither his own Power, Promise, nor Oath were *strong enough to hold him*; and keep him stedfast to these Testimonies of God, therefore he prays *twice together* to be *upheld*, *Psal.* 119. 16, 17. *Uphold me according to thy Word that I may live, and let me not be ashamed of my Hope.* And again, *Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe, so shall I have respect to thy Statutes continually.*

After Affliction, *take heed of that which your Hearts naturally are most prone to Idolize.* Whatever has had *Gods Room*, that is to say, the *highest Room* in your Hearts; is certainly your *Idol.* Be very strict in the Inquisition to find the Idol out, and be sure to depose it; let it be at the *Footstool*, while the Lord alone in the *Throne*, and has by far the Preeminence above it in your Affections. If

any

any of you *Love Pleaſure more than God*, Pleaſure is your *Idol*, or if you love Gain more than God, or if you love Relations, Preferments, or Ornaments more than God; theſe things are Idolized; now remember how *vain* the *Idol* was in your Affliction and Diſtreſs, and how *helpleſs* then it was found. The delights of Senſe, the earthly Treaſures, the Relations; and other things you were ſo fond of, you were *forced* to ſee that *help was not in them.*

The Heathen Poet notably expreſſes this.

Non domus, & fundus; non æris acervus & auri;
Ægroto domini deduxit corpore febres;
Non animo curas —— Horat. *Epiſt* 2. l. 1.

Which may be thus Engliſhed.

Nor Houſe, nor Lands, nor heaps of golden Ore;
Can feaveriſh owners unto Health reſtore;
Nor eaſe their Minds of Care. ——

Idolatry in a ſpecial manner provokes the Lord to Jealouſie; The *bowing* of the *Knee* to *Images*, as Pagans and Papiſts do; *diſpleaſes* the *Onely true God.* But if that *leading* affection of *Love*, which is one of the *higheſt pieces* of *Worſhip*, is placed principally upon any thing beſides God; hereby his anger and jealouſie is blown up to a great heat and hight; and mark,

mark, what the Apoſtle ſays, 1 *Cor.* 10. 22. *Do we provoke the Lord to Jealouſie? are we ſtronger than he?* As his *Strength* is *infinitely beyond* ours; ſo there is an *Infiniteneſs* in the *Folly* and *Madneſs*, when any Adventure to provoke him to Jealouſie. Love is the greateſt Grace, 1 *Cor.* 13. 13. Love is the *firſt and great Commandment*; what ever therefore is moſt apt to ſteal away your Love from God, keep your *Hearts*, *while you live*, *ſhut* againſt it with an *Holy Indignation*, Hoſ. 14. 8. *Ephraim ſhall ſay, what have I to do any more with Idols? I have heard him and obſerved him: I am like a green Fir-tree, from me is thy Fruit found.*

5. After Affliction, be *diligent againſt the Sin, which does moſt eaſily beſet you*, Heb. 12. 1. *Let us lay aſide every weight, and the Sin which does ſo eaſily beſet us, and let us run with Patience the race which is ſet before us.* Every Sin is a *Weight and Clog*. I wiſh that every one lookt upon it as ſuch! But the Sin, which by Reaſon of our *Complexions*, *Callings*, or the *general Practice* in the Age and Place we live in; is moſt *apt to Prevail*; that is the *heavy Weight*, and the *worſt Clog* of all to hinder us in our running the Chriſtian Race.

You had need to be watchful againſt the Corruption of your Nature which though there be

be the Grace of God in Truth in you, is far from being perfectly healed; and is ready upon all Occaſions, and Temptations, to break forth, to the diſpleaſing of God, the wounding of your Conſciences, the defiling of your Souls, and the diſturbance of your Peace.

And *whatſoever Iniquity* it is, which becauſe it pretends your *Security* from danger, or your *Pleaſure* and *Gain*; you find your ſelves *moſt ſtrongly addicted to*; verily there is need of the ſtricter watch, and more fervent Prayer; that you may not be *overcome* by, nay that you may not ſo much as *enter into Temptation*. The Sin which does moſt eaſily beſet you, has already done you the greateſt miſchief, and is likely to do you more ſtill; and if you ſhould at laſt *fall into Hell*; *This* would be one of the *heavieſt weights* to *ſink you thither*.

6. After Affliction *beware of ſloath and Idleneſs*. Live the *reſt of your time in the Fleſh, not to the Luſts of men*; *but to the Will of God*, 1 Pet. 4. 2. Let not *your own Luſts*, as ſo many *Cormorants devour* your time, while you are making Proviſion for them, and fulfilling them. And let not the Luſts, Humours and Pleaſures of *others* have *you* and your *time* at *Command*. And though they *think it ſtrange, that you run not with them to the ſame exceſs of Riot, ſpeaking evil of you*, yet be not diſcouraged; for *they ſhall give an account unto him*

that is ready to Judge the quick and the dead, 1 Pet. 4. 4, 5. And that Judge will *condemn them*, and will *Approve and Reward* your *Diligence* in *ſeeking* him, and *working* for him.

You have *not improved* your Afflictions, if you have not *ceaſed to waſt*, if you have not *learned* to improve your *time*. In your Sickneſs and Diſtreſs, what a *view had you of Eternity?* and what a trouble was it to you, that ſuch a deal of time had been ſtolen away and loſt in Sin and Vanity? Perhaps Eternity was ſo amazing, in the *vaſtneſs* and *unchangeableneſs* of it; that you concluded, that if you were to live *Methuſelahs* Age; 'twould be unreaſonable to miſpend wilfully *one hour* of it. Now after Affliction is over; and ſo little of your time is behind; will you be *laviſh* of that time *ſtill*: will you *loſe* any *more*? Oh ſee the *Wiſdom* of *redeeming* Time, *Eph.* 5. 15, 16. *See then that ye walk circumſpectly not as Fools but as wiſe, redeeming the time becauſe the days are evil.* And *fear* the *loſs* of time, 1 *Pet.* 1. 17. *If ye call on the Father, who without reſpect of Perſons judgeth according to every mans work; paſs the time of your ſojourning here in fear.*

Be ſure to loſe no more; for to loſe *all your time*; is moſt certainly to *loſe your ſelves*, and that *for ever*. In the other World there is

is *no obtaining* Mercy by thoſe who all the while they were in this World, *ſlighted* Mercy. There is no *working* out your *own Salvation* after death; if all your Life-time Salvation be neglected.

7. After Affliction *be full of gratitude, Holy Ingenuity and Love.* The *Calves of your Lips*, moſt acceptable Sacrifices; ſhould be offered frequently, nay continually, with an *enlarged* Heart, with a *willing* mind. *David* was in danger of loſing his Life among the *Philiſtines*, God preſerves it. How *Fruitful* are his *Lips* in Praiſes! *Pſal.* 34. 1, 2, 3, 4. *I will bleſs the Lord at all times, his Praiſe ſhall continually be in my Mouth; my Soul ſhall make her boaſt in the Lord; the humble ſhall hear thereof and be glad. Oh magnifie the Lord with me, and let us exalt his Name together! I ſought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears.* Hezekiah had been deliver'd from *deadly* Sickneſs, he was raiſed by ſpecial Favour and Power; when according to Nature, Death was unavoidable. Coming ſo unexpectedly and ſo quickly from a *ſeeming Death-Bed* to the *Temple*, how does he make that *Temple Ring* with his Thanskgivings! *Iſa.* 38. 17, 19. *Behold for Peace, I had great bitterneſs; but thou haſt in love to my Soul deliver'd it from the Pit of Corruption; thou haſt caſt all my Sins behind thy back. The living, the living, he ſhall Praiſe thee as* I *do*

this day: the Father to the Children ſhall make known thy Truth.

Not onely muſt your Mouths be fill'd with Praiſes, but your *Hearts with Love*; and Ingenuity ſhould make you ſtudy what to render unto God. Obſerve the *working* of the Pſalmiſts *grateful Breaſt*, after God had *deliver'd his Soul from Death, his Eyes from Tears and his Feet from falling*, Pſal. 116. 1. *I love the Lord becauſe he hath heard my Voice and my Supplication.* V. 3. *The Sorrows of Death compaſſed me, the Pains of Hell got hold upon me.* V. 5, 6. *Gracious is the Lord and Righteous, yea our God is merciful; I was brought low and he helped me.* V. 7. *Return to thy reſt, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* V. 12. *What ſhall I render to the Lord for all his Benefits towards me?* He thought nothing *too good*, nothing *too much* for that God, who had been *ſo good* to him; who had done *ſo much* for him!

Still you ſhould be *contriving* to make more *ſuitable* returns for what you have received, and with your Praiſes and Service, your *Hearts and Love* muſt be the *Principal part* of the returns you make. Love lies in *Deſire* and *Delight*; no *Mercies* ſo *deſirable* as the *Father of Mercies*; God *Himſelf* is more to be *delighted in* than any of the *Benefits* he beſtows. Take heed of loving *Deliverance* more than

than your *Deliverer.* Mercies themſelves are *Idolized*, and it provokes the Lord to *Jealouſie*; if *they* are *prized* and *delighted* in, more than the *Lord God of your Mercies.* Therefore the Pſalmiſt, though he valued Deliverance from Enemies, and Trouble; yet principally rejoices in God himſelf, *Pſal.* 9. 2. *I will be glad and rejoice in Thee, I will Praiſe thy Name O thou moſt High!* Rejoice in God more than in the return of Health, more than in the Prolongation of Life, or any other Comfort and Enjoyment. Mercies attain their end, when God is more endeared to you by them. God will be *all in all* in *Heaven*; and the more he is *your all* at preſent, the *more of Heaven* you enjoy on *Earth.*

8. After Affliction be *ſenſible you are not ſafe in your own Hands*; *therefore commit the keeping of your Souls to God,* 1 Pet. 4. 19. *Let them commit the keeping of their Souls to Him in well-doing, as unto a Faithful Creator.* If you are indeed wiſe and *know* your ſelves, you will *diſtruſt* your ſelves. *Self-Confidence* is an undeniable Argument of *Self-Ignorance.* Truſt your ſelves in no hands, but thoſe out of which *none* ſhall ever be able to *pluck you*, and thoſe are hands of *Chriſt* and the *Father*, *Joh.* 10. 27, 28, 29. *My Sheep hear my Voice, and I know them and they follow me, and I give unto them Life Eternal, and they ſhall never periſh, neither ſhall any pluck them out of*

my hand; *My Father which gave them me is greater than All, and none is able to pluck them out of my Fathers hand.* Not onely in the Hour and Agony of Death; but all your *lives long*; every *Day* and *Hour*, you have need ſtill to be *commending your Spirits unto God*: for they are ſafe with none beſides, *Pſal.* 31. 5. *Into thy hands do I commit my Spirit, thou haſt redeemed me, O Lord God of Truth.*

USE IV. Of Counſel more *peculiarly* to *Saints*, who are *afflicted*. Shew your ſelves to be Saints indeed, and let your Graces now be much in Exerciſe. *Spices beaten* in the Mortar, are the more *Fragrant*; Afflicted Saints ſhould manifeſt a *rare and excellent Spirit*; bnt no *Diſſatisfaction* or *Diſcontent*; conſidering the Truth of this Doctrine, *that they are afflicted for their good.* You that are Saints; in your Troubles you *need* Counſel; and 'tis not to be doubted but you will *heed* it; I ſhall give it in theſe particulars.

1. Be *Patient whatever your Affliction is.* That *God* whom you ſerve is patient towards *Man*; has been patient towards *you*; how many affronts and Provocations has he born, put up, and pardoned! The Lord Jeſus Chriſt was a *Pattern* of *Patience* and *Meekneſs*; When he was *reviled of Men, he reviled not again*; *when he ſuffered he threatned not*, 1 Pet. 2. 23. Nay many had *Life by his Blood*,

who *imbrued* their hands in *that Blood* and *ſhed* it. And when it pleaſed his *Father to bruiſe him and to put him to grief, yet as a Lamb brought to the ſlaughter; and as a Sheep before her Shearers is dumb; ſo he opened not his Mouth.* Iſa. 53. 7. The Members of the Body ſhould imitate Chriſt the Head in Patience.

Vivificatrix Chriſti ſanguine, etiam qui fudit ſanguinem Chriſti; Talis eſt Chriſti ac tanta patientia; quæ niſi talis exiſteret; Eccleſia non haberet. Cypr. *de bono Patientiæ.* p. *mihi* 316. *Paulum quoque Apoſtolum*

It may be an Inducement to a quiet bearing of Affliction; that *far worſe* has been *demerited* by the *very beſt*, than is *endured*, Ezr. 9. 13. *Thou our God haſt puniſhed us leſs than our Iniquities deſerve.* But the *Benefit* of Affliction, proves that Patience is a *Grace* with a *great deal of Reaſon* in it; for who can rationally take it ill, when good comes to them; and *ſpiritual kindneſſes*, which are the moſt *real* kindneſſes, are *done* them?

I have demonſtrated the good of Affliction to the Saints; I ſhall now demonſtrate, the *good of Patience.*

Patience is your great *Security*, and makes you to *keep Poſſeſſion of your Selves*, Luk. 21. 19. *In your Patience, poſſeſs ye your Souls.* A Patient man, whatever he loſes, whatever he ſuffers, is *ſtill himſelf*, not diſcompoſed, not

diſtracted and *hurried away* from the *Conduct* and *Satisfaction* of that *Holy Wiſdom*, and the *Grace of God* which is in Him. By *Patient Continuance* in well-doing, and by patient *Suffering* rather than he will *ceaſe* in well-doing, his Soul is ſafe, and ſhall never be loſt; *for he that endures to the end, the ſame ſhall be ſaved.* Mat. 24. 13. And in what a *calm* has he Poſſeſſion of his own Spirit, when his *outward Condition* is moſt *Stormy* and *Tempeſtuous*! He has *caſt Anchor within the Vail*; and that Anchor is *ſure and ſtedfaſt*, Heb. 6. 19. Keeps his Mind from Fluctuation and toſſing too and fro. Patience is the Souls *Garriſon*, and *preſerves* it in that *Peace*; which neither *Earth* nor *Hell* are able to *diſturb*.

Patience is that which *makes you perfect*, Jam. 1. 4. *But let Patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire wanting nothing.* The more there is of Chriſtian Patience, and Strength to perſevere both in Active and Paſſive Obedience, which God calls you to; 'tis an Argument you are arrived to the greater Degree of Perfection in Grace and Holineſs. And beſides this, Patience will make you *leſs concerned* at thoſe *Wants*; which to *impatient* Creatures are *ſo ſenſible an Affliction.* He that is very Patient under *Sickneſs*, may truly be ſaid not ſo much to *want health*; He that is Patient under Poverty, does not ſo much want Riches. The Chriſtian is not diſturbed

ſturbed at the want of thoſe things, which he can be contentedly without. Patience made the Apoſtle go through great variety of Conditions with a moſt even and compoſed Mind and Spirit, 2 *Cor.* 6. 4, 8, 9, 10. *In all things approving our ſelves as the Miniſters of God in much Patience, in Affliction, in Neceſſities, in Diſtreſſes; By Honour and Diſhonour, by evil Report and good Report, as deceivers and yet true; as unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chaſtned, and not kill'd; as ſorrowful, yet always rejoycing; as Poor, yet making many Rich; as having nothing and yet poſſeſſing all things.*

Patience very well *becomes you*, conſidering the *Relation* you ſtand in to God, who is a Father *too Good and Wiſe*, to give to any of his Children, a *juſt ground* for *unſubmiſſion*, things cannot be ordered better or with more Wiſdom than He orders them. The *compliance* of your *Wills* with *His*; will be a great evidence that you are *renewed in the Spirit of your Minds*, and that you have the *new Heart* promiſed in the new Covenant. And this Patience of yours being *manifeſted* in whatever you feel from the *Hand* of *God* or *Man*; will be a great *Credit to Religion*; and a *Conviction to the World*, that there is a *great Efficacy* in the *Truth* of the Goſpel, and in the *Grace of God*, which can carry you ſo *far beyond the Strength of Nature.*

Finally

* *Patientia est quæ nos Deo commendat & servat. Ipsa est quæ iram temperat; quæ linguam frænat, quæ mentem gubernat, pacem custodit, incendium simultatis extinguit, coercet potentiam divitum, inopiam pauperum refovet; facit humiles in prosperis, in adversis fortes; contra injurias & contumelias mites; tentationes expugnat, persecutiones tolerat, passiones & martyria consummat.* Cyprian. *De Patientiæ bono*, pag. *mihi* 319.

* Finally Patience will make and keep you acceptable to God, it will restrain Anger, and every other disturbing Passion, it will bridle the Tongue; keep the Spirit under Rule and Government, it will extinguish Contention, and keep Peace from being broken. It will be coercive of the Power of the Rich; and it will refresh the neediness of the Poor. It will make you humble in the height of Prosperity; so strong as not to faint in the depth of Adversity; it will make you mild against the greatest injuries, it will break the force of Temptation, and fortifie you against Persecution; though it should rise so high as Martyrdom. Let all this perswade you to the exercise of this admirable Grace of Patience; and see that it fail not in Affliction. Cry to the Lord for the increase of it, and that nothing may be too hard or heavy for it. He is called, Ὁ Θεὸς τῆς ὑπομονῆς καὶ τῆς παρακλήσεως. *The God of Patience and Consolation*; the more Patience is wrought in you; you are likely to Experience the greater Comfort.

2. You

2. You that are afflicted Saints, *Pray that your Faith may be ſo far from failing, that it may continually be increaſing.* Faith is a Grace of great Neceſſity and Uſe; the Chriſtian *lives* by Faith; he *ſees* by Faith; he *ſtands* by Faith; he *works* by Faith; and is *kept* through Faith unto Salvation. In Affliction Faith is the Saints mighty ſupport; for Faith *bears hard* upon the *Faithfulneſs of God*, which will never fail; God is faithful not onely in giving the *good things* he has promiſed; but alſo in *vouchſafing Correction* which he ſees 'tis *needful*. The Pſalmiſt ſpeaks thus. *I have believed, therefore have I ſpoken, I was greatly afflicted*, Pſal. 116. 10. The *greatneſs* of Affliction *hindred not* the *Acting of his Faith*; but his Faith hindred *his fainting* under the greateſt Affliction, *Pſal.* 27. 13. *I had fainted, unleſs I had believed to ſee the goodneſs of the Lord in the Land of the living.*

God may be *truſted* in, though he *hides* his face; though there are *rebukes and frowns* in his Countenance; God may be truſted in, though his *ways are Dark and Cloudy*, and his *Hand heavy*. Nay Holy *Job* ſays, *Though he ſlay me yet will I truſt in him*, Job 13. 15. Though the Providence of God ſeems hardly reconcileable with his Promiſes; but looks as if it thwarted his Promiſes; this is onely *Deceptio viſus*, the Eyes miſtake. Let *Faith believe*

lieve what *Senſe* cannot *diſcern*, and *Senſe* will be *forced* at laſt to *grant*, that *Faith* was in the right.

In all Afflictions God is making good his *Everlaſting Covenant, which is well ordered in all things and ſure*, he is ſtill purſuing his deſign of Mercy towards his People, and promoting the Work of Grace, and Salvation. *Believe* this and *reſt ſatisfied*, onely let deſires be ſtrong, that what God deſigns in ſending Affliction, may be attained; and that his Diſcipline may be to good effect and purpoſe.

3. You afflicted Saints, *give Glory to God, who afflicts you.* Here you muſt know that God is of none, but of himſelf; his Perfections undenied; He is unchangeable, no Addition can be made to his Eſſential Excellency or his Bleſſedneſs. As all that come to him find him *All-ſufficient*, ſo, which is a *great deal more*, He is *Self-ſufficient*; Infinitely *more* muſt be to the *Bleſſedneſs of God*, then would *be enough*, for the Bleſſedneſs of *ten thouſand Worlds* of *Men and Angels*. So that your glorifying of God is *apprehending, acknowledging, and declaring his Glory*, not *making him really more glorious than he was.*

Glorifie God by Believing him to be what he has revealed himſelf, by giving him the higheſt

higheſt room in your Hearts; depend upon him for all things. This Fountain of living Waters is glorified, when Saints always lie at it, perpetually derive Streams from it, and the broken Ciſterns are forſaken. Glorifie God by an higher Valuation of his Favour in Chriſt; and a greater Contempt of earthly things in Compariſon. Glorifie God by more willing ſervice, and reſolute cleaving to him. God is honoured indeed, when nothing can ſeparate the Saints from him: When neither the fierceſt Wind (to allude to the Tabb) can blow away, nor the hotteſt Sun can make them to caſt away that *change of Raiment* with which he has *cloathed* them. When they can ſay with the Church of old, *Pſal.* 44. 17, 18, 19. *All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten Thee, neither have we dealt falſly in thy Covenant; Our Heart is not turned back from thee, neither have our ſteps declined from thy ways; though thou haſt ſore broken us in the Place of Dragons, and covered us with the Shaddow of Death.*

Finally, Glorifie God by *ſuch Works*, as are *not a denial of God*; but a Demonſtration, *what a Lord* he is; and what his *Grace is able* to *effect*. The *Works* of many *Profeſſors* prove them *Atheiſts*, Tit. 1. 16. *They profeſs that they know God, but in Works deny him, being abominable and diſobedient, and to every good work reprobate.* But when Saints by *good Works*

Works are *ſhining Lights*; hereby Glory redounds to their Heavenly Father. For as the Works of Creation, are an Argument to prove moſt plainly *an Eternal Power and Godhead*; ſo the *Works* of *New Creatures*, ſo *different* from, and ſo *excellent* above the Works of *others*; make it evident that *God is in* theſe New Creatures; and his *Grace is with* them of a Truth.

4. You afflicted Saints, *obſerve the Special Sins, for which your Father is angry with you, and corrects you.* That Grace which is in you makes you weary of its contrary; and the more Grace you have, the more weary you will be of Sin which remains in you. Cry to be *cleanſed from faults* that are ſo *ſecret*; that they hardly are *diſcerned* to be faults, *Pſal.* 19. 12. *Lurking Feavers*, how dangerous are they! and much more dangerous are *latent Corruptions.* Therefore *Surely it is meet to be ſaid unto God, I have born Chaſtiſement, I will not offend any more; that which I ſee not teach thou me, if I have done Iniquity I will do no more.* Job 34. 31, 32. Find out, and *purge out all the old Leaven*, whether it be the Leaven of Pride, or Hypocriſie, or Earthly-mindedneſs, or Uncharitableneſs or any other *Wickedneſs*, that ye may be *a new Lump as ye are unleavened.* The *bitter Cup* is intended as a *purging Potion.* Earneſtly therefore deſire, that the Iniquity which has moſt prevailed,

vailed, and defiled you, may be taken away.

5. You afflicted Saints *answer the Lords Expectations from you, lest Wrath from the Lord be upon you.* He is sometimes very severe to them, that are very dear to him. He *forgives their Iniquities, but takes Vengeance of their Inventions,* Psal. 99. 8. That eminent *Moses being provoked in his Spirit spake unadvisedly with his Lips,* Psal. 106. 33. And that Word *cost him his Life.* He falls, before *Israel* enter'd into *Canaan. Hezekiah* was a *Gracious Man,* full *of Faith* himself; and a *Prince very zealous for the Reformation of* Judah. See what a Character is given him, 2 *Chron.* 31. 20, 21. *Thus did* Hezekiah *throughout all* Judah, *and wrought that which was good and Right, and Truth before the Lord his God; And in every Work, that he began in the Service of the House of God; and in the Law, and in the Commandments to seek his God, he did it with all his Heart and prospered.* And yet this Excellent King after Affliction, not watching his Heart, but Suffering it to be *lifted* up; *Wrath* 'tis said *was upon him,* 2 Chron. 32. 35.

Though Gods Love to his Children be never turned into *hatred*; yet notwithstanding his Love to them, he may be *very angry* with them; he may take them up and lash them

in

in the view of all, to *vindicate his Holineſs*, and to make it evident, that he takes *no pleaſure in Wickedneſs* by *whomſoever* it is committed. After you have felt his ſtrokes, *fear* your Fathers *Frowns and Anger*; pleaſe him in all things and *abound* in ſo doing; this he juſtly looks for, after he has ſhewn *Care and Kindneſs* both in *Correcting* you, and in *flinging the Rod* out of his hand.

6. Let the Rod, you have *been chaſtized with, cauſe you to mend your Pace in Heavens way.* Why ſhould Saints be as ſo many *Snails*, who ought rather to be *ſwifter than Eagles* haſting to the Prey? Is there ſuch an Holy and Mighty *Spirit* to *help* your Infirmities? Are there *ſuch Promiſes* of *aſſiſting Grace?* Is there ſuch a *glorious Crown* and *Prize* at the *end of the race*? And does your Salvation *grow nearer* and nearer every day? Oh put on with greater ſpeed. And let not a *greater Violence* be uſed by earthly men for meer *trifles*; than is by you, for the *Heavenly Kingdom.* Imitate thoſe wiſely eager ones, *Mat.* 11. 12. *From the days of* John *the Baptiſt until now, the Kingdom of Heaven ſuffereth Violence, and the Violent take it by force.* Imitate the Apoſtle *Paul*, who though he had laboured ſo abundantly, was far from tiring, but preſs't on ſtill with greater forwardneſs *towards the Mark, for the prize of the high Calling of God.*

7. Abound

7. Abound in *that Work for God here upon Earth, which cannot be done when you come to Heaven.* Fill up your Time, well with that buſineſs, which will ceaſe when you enter upon Eternity. The *Preachers* of the Goſpel may do *much* at *preſent*, which they *cannot* do *hereafter.* Now they may *warn Sinners to flee from the Wrath to come.* Now they may *call them to turn from their evil ways and live*; now they may *pray them in Chriſts ſtead to be reconciled to God.* Now they *may take heed to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghoſt has made them overſeers to feed the Church of God, which he has purchaſed with his own Blood*, Acts 20. 28. And take *heed to their Miniſtry which they have received in the Lord, that they may fulfil it*, Col. 4. 17. Now they may ſhew themſelves in *all things Patterns of good Works*, Examples to the Flock; always *labouring fervently for them in Prayer, that they may ſtand perfect and compleat in all the Will of God.*

Chriſtians alſo have their Work *now* to do; which cannot be done in the other World. Now they may *adorn the Doctrine of God their Saviour in all things.* Now with *well-doing they may put to ſilence the Ignorance of fooliſh men*, 1 Pet. 2. 15. Now by a Conſcientious Performance of Relative Duties, they may be great Bleſſings to their Relations, and great-

ly promote their Eternal Intereſt. They *may be blameleſs and harmleſs without rebuke; in the midſt of a crooked and perverſe Nation,* acting *like the Children of God, ſhining as Lights in the World, holding forth the Word of Life,* Phil. 2. 14, 15, 16.

But when once *Death has ſeized* on the Preachers of the Word, their *Mouths are ſtopt with Earth,* and they are *effectually ſilenced*; they can ſpeak unto, and overſee the Church no longer. At Death alſo Chriſtian's Work is at an end in this World; therefore before the approach of *Deaths Night,* when it will be too late to work; Let all in the mean time work the harder.

8. Though you *are deliver'd out of Affliction, recover'd from your Diſtempers, be ſure to die daily.* So did the Apoſtle, 1 Cor. 15. 31. Dying daily, implies a *daily Meditation* of Death, looking upon your ſelves every day within *the reach of Death,* and a continual *preparedneſs for Death,* and a ſtedfaſt *Reſolution* rather to *ſuffer Death,* than to make *Shipwrack of Faith and a good Conſcience.* Do not reckon upon long Life; but be perſwaded, to live *well* is to live *indeed.* Live as thoſe that *muſt* die *certainly*; as thoſe that *may* die *ſuddenly.* Be not offended at the *Croſs* of Chriſt, though it ſhould ly *ſo heavy* upon you, as to *preſs you* to Death. Sinful *ſaving* the Life,

is

is *loſing it*; but they who are valiant for the Truth of Chriſt, and will venture the *loſing of Life for Chriſts ſake, ſhall find it*, Mat. 16. 25. And if *natural Life* be continued; be earneſtly deſirous that *Spiritual Life and livelineſs* may be increaſed. Pray to be *quickned*, as the Pſalmiſt often does, *Pſal.* 119. and look unto Jeſus, who is a quickning Spirit, 1 *Cor.* 15. 45. *The firſt Man* Adam *was made a living Soul, the laſt* Adam *was made a quickning Spirit.* As he has given you Life, ſo he is ready to give it *more and more abundantly*; this will make you to *live to him*, and to be unweariedly *active for him.* The quickned Apoſtl's earneſt deſire was that Chriſt might be magnified by him; his *Life was at his Lords Service*; and he was ready to *die alſo to ſerve him.* Phil. 1. 20. *According to my earneſt Expectation and my Hope, that in nothing I ſhall be aſhamed, but that with all boldneſs, as always, ſo now alſo, Chriſt ſhall be magnified in my Body, whether it be by Life or by Death.*

USE V. Of *Conſolation* to Saints to whom it is *ſo good*, when they are *afflicted.* Unto the *Righteous there ariſeth Light in the Darkneſs.* The *Rainbow*, the *emblem* of *Peace* and *token* of the *Covenant*, is often *ſeen* in the *blackeſt Cloud.* The Saints are never in *ſuch depths*; but Comfort belongs to them, 'tis *good* for them to be *as they are*; nay all things conſidered, 'tis *beſt* for them.

Quod ſis, eſſe velis, nihilque malis.

Believers ſhould never ſay, they had *rather* it might be *otherwiſe* with them; than *God ſees it fit it ſhould* be; when the Plough of Affliction pierces deepeſt, *Light and Joy* is ſowing; and the Hopes of what at laſt will be reaped, ſhould allay the Sorrow wherewith the ſowing is attended. The *Grounds* of Conſolation to afflicted Saints are theſe.

1. Gods *goodneſs is unqueſtionable, however he is pleaſed to deal with his People.* Let them be *plagued*, let them be *chaſtned never ſo ſore*; yet *God is good to* Iſrael, *even to them that are of a clean Heart*, Pſal. 73. 1. God is *their* God, and his dealings are ever *according* to his *Gracious Covenant.* His wounding of them, is not like the *wounds* given by an *Enemy*, but like the *Chyrurgians Lancings* in order to *greater ſoundneſs* and for *Lifes Preſervation*, Iſa. 27. *Hath he ſmitten him, as he ſmote thoſe that ſmote him?* No no, great is the Difference between the *Rod* and the *Scorpion*; between Believers being *chaſtned as Children*; and the Wicked their *falling into the hands of the Living God*, who takes Vengeance upon them.

2. That *good* which Saints receive by Affliction is *Spiritual.* The *Soul* has a great kind-

neſs

neſs done to it. The *Conſcience is bettered* as to *calmneſs* and *cleanneſs*, the Heart is made more pure, the *Spirit of the Lord* works a greater change into the *Image* of God; ſo that there is an advancing from *Glory to Glory*. When *Job* had been ſome while afflicted, his Spirit began to run more clear, *Job* 23. 10. *But he knoweth the way that I take, when he hath tried me, I ſhall come forth like Gold.* The *Fire and Furnace* in *Zion purges* the Droſs, and how then does the *Gold ſhine!*

3. That good which the Saints reap by Affliction, is *peculiar and diſtinguiſhing*. Wicked men are either ſtupid under Affliction; or if they are ſtartled; they return to their former Security after Affliction. To have *Affliction ſanctified* is a favour *peculiar* to Gods *peculiar People*.

4. This good which the Saints receive by Affliction at preſent, is *an earneſt to them of Eternal good things in the other World*. Afflictions are part of the *Purgatory*, through which the Saints paſs and are made meet for Glory. The *Popiſh Purgatory* is a *meer Invention* for that Antichriſtian Churches *ſecular Gain*. The Dead find it to be nothing; but vaſt is the Worldly gain accrueing hereby to the *living*; by this *Craft* comes in the *Prieſts Wealth*. But the Purgatory of Affliction, pro-

motes Purity, and is really Beneficial. The Rod at preſent yeilds the peaceable fruits of Righteouſneſs, and when *theſe are brought forth* a *Crown of Righteouſneſs* is aſſured, 2 *Tim.* 4. 8.

I have done with the *firſt* Doctrine, *That Saints are afflicted for their good.*

I ſhall be Brief in the Second which follows.

D. 2. The ſecond Doctrine, which I raiſed from the Text was this. *The Rod of God is a means to make the Word of God to be the better Learned,* Pſal. 119. 67. *Before I was afflicted I went aſtray, but now have I kept thy Word.* Affliction was the means to put a ſtop to the Pſalmiſts wandring; it brought his Feet into the *right* Path and *eſtabliſhed his goings.* What a *light ſhines* in the *School* of Affliction? Things are ſeen *naked* there! *Sin*; the *World*; *Hell* and *Deſtruction*; are all naked. The *great things* of the Word, are plainly ſeen to be *great* and *good indeed*; and are no longer lookt upon as *ſtrange things.*

In the handling of this Doctrine, I ſhall,

1. Shew you *when the Word of God is indeed learned.*

2. What

2. What *influence the Rod of God has unto the better Learning of his Word.*

3. Make *Application.*

In the first Place, I am to shew you, *when the Word of God is indeed and aright learned.*

1. Learning the Word implies, *a Perswasion of the Words Divine Authority and Truth.* He has not learned the Word, who does not believe it to be indeed the Word of God, who cannot lie, 2 *Tim.* 3. 16. *All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God.* Mens *Contradictions* to the Word are *audacious* and *damnable falshoods.* And if *Angels from Heaven* should speak contrary to it, they must not have our *Assent*, but our *Anathema*, Gal. 1. 8. *But though we or an Angel from Heaven, preach any other Gospel unto you, than that which we have preached unto you; let him be accursed.* They who have learned the Word of God, perceive the *Harmony* of all its *parts*; and believe the *whole*, and are *influenced* by that *belief*, for the certain Truth of the Word makes it most *Encouraging* and *Comfortable* to the *Saints*; and with what *Sweet Security* do they *rest* upon it! And the same Truth *should* make it *very Terrible* to all *impenitent Sinners!*

2. Learning the Word implies, *an obſerving the Scope and Deſign of the Word of God*; now the Deſign and Scope of it is, the *Glory of God*; and *Mans Happineſs and Salvation.* God cannot have an *higher end* in what he does, than *Himſelf*, for *he* is *above all*; therefore he has *made* and *does all* things *for Himſelf*; and truly ſince *of him and through him are all things*; he is worthy that all things ſhould be *referred to him*, and that in all things, he ſhould always be *glorified*, Rom. 11. 36. *For of him, and through him, and to him are all things to whom be Glory for ever*, Amen. In *Subordination* to his own Glory; the Lord deſigns mans wellfare, *Luk.* 2. 14. *Glory be to God in the Higheſt, on Earth Peace, good will towards men.* When the Word of God is truly learned; *great notice is taken* of its *deſign*; and the *Learners aim* is accordingly *directed.* The *Glory of God* and *mans trueſt good* are *inſeparably conjoined.* So that this is paſt doubt, when man moſt Minds *Gods Honour*, he Minds moſt his *own Intereſt and Happineſs.*

3. Learning the Word, implies *taking due notice of the Purity and Holineſs of the Word of God*, Pſal. 12. 6. *The Words of the Lord are pure Words, as Silver tried in a Furnace of Earth purified ſeven times.* The Pſalmiſt ſaw this Purity, and did not take offence at it, but

but very much *liked* it, and *loved* the Word the *better* for it, *Pſal.* 119. 140. *Thy Word is very pure; therefore thy Servant loveth it.* God the Author of this Word is of *Purer Eyes than to behold Iniquity*; no wonder that the Word is purer *than to allow of any Iniquity.* The Word will not permit Sin in the *Tabernacle*, *Job* 11. 14. *If Iniquity be in thy Hand, put it far away, and let not wickedneſs dwell in thy Tabernacle.* The Word prohibits *our contentedly Suffering* Sin to *ly upon our Brother*, Levit. 19. 17. *Thou ſhalt not hate thy Brother in thy Heart; thou ſhalt in any wiſe rebuke thy Neighbour; and not ſuffer Sin upon him.* The *hands* muſt be cleanſed, and ſo muſt *eſpecially* the *Heart*, Jam. 4. 8. *Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you, cleanſe your Hands ye Sinners, purifie your Hearts ye double minded.* If Sin commands the *Tongue*, Religion is but vain; if Sin be regarded in the Heart, Prayer is to no purpoſe. How excellent and pure is this Word of God! and thoſe that learn it ſee both the Neceſſity and Excellency of Purity and Holineſs; and they *hunger and thirſt*, and *follow after Righteouſneſs and true Holineſs.*

4. Learning the Word, implies *beholding wondrous things in the Word of God*, Pſal. 119. 18. *Open thou my Eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy Law.* And *V.* 129. *Thy Teſtimonies are wonderful, therefore*

fore doeth my Soul keep them. The *Light* which ſhines forth from hence, is *marvellous*, 1 Pet. 2. 2. *That ye ſhould ſhew forth the Praiſes of him, who hath called you out of Darkneſs into marvellous Light.* The *Mercy* is *amazing*; which ſaves from *ſo much Sin*; prevents *no leſs* than *endleſs Miſery*; and brings thoſe to *Eternal Life*, who *deſerved to die the Eternal Death*, Jud. v. 21. *Keep your ſelves in the Love of God, looking for the Mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto Eternal Life.* That *Wiſdom*, which appears in the contrivance of Mans Redemption by Chriſt the Mediator, is the Admiration of the *elect Principalities and Powers*, Eph. 3. 10. *To the intent that now unto the Principalities and Powers in the Heavenly Places, might be known by the Church the manifold Wiſdom of God.* And the *Love of God in Chriſt*, is moſt *ſweetly aſtoniſhing*! 'Tis without *Motive*, without *Meaſure*, without *Alteration*, its *height* and *length* and *depth* and *breadth* are paſt *our reach* and *finding out.* And how *highly* are thoſe who are intereſted in this Love, *advanced*! 1 Joh. 3. 1. *Behold what manner of Love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the Sons of God!* and all his Sons *are heirs of Everlaſting Glory.*

5. Learning the Word, implies *knowing the Truth as it is in Jeſus*, Eph. 4. 20, 21. *But ye have not ſo learned Chriſt; if ſo be that ye*

have

have heard him, and been taught by him, as the Truth is in Jesus. To know the Truth as it is in Jesus, is to know *Christ himself*, and all *Divine Truths* with *respect to Christ.* He is the *Center* in which *all the Lines* in Scripture *meet.* If God be lookt upon *without respect* to this *Mediator*; the remembrance of the *Holy and Righteous and Almighty Jehovah*; must needs be *terrible and confounding* to *guilty and defiled Sinners.* But the Knowledge of God *in Christ*, is *beneficial* and *reviving*; for in Christ he is *accessible*, and a *God in Covenant*; and how encouraging is the Knowledg of *Duty*; when we *look to Jesus*, because in Christ we have *assisting Grace* to do it sincerely; and when 'tis thus done, in *Him* we have acceptance, 1 *Pet.* 2. 5. *Ye also as lively stones are built up a Spiritual House, an Holy Priesthood to offer up Spiritual Sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.* Though the *House be Spiritual*; though the *Priesthood be Holy*, though the *Sacrifice be Spiritual*; yet 'tis *not upon their own*, but upon the *account of Jesus Christ*, that they are *acceptable.* Looking to Jesus, we may look upon *Sin* and *Misery* without *dismay*, nay with *thankful Hearts*; for He saves from *both*, and through *him* an *abundant entrance is administred into the Everlasting Kingdom.* He has not learned the Word to any purpose, who does *not know* that Christ *is all in all*, and *fills all in all.*

6. Learn-

6. Learning the Word of God, implies *feeling the Power and Efficacy of this Word*; till the Spirit accompanies it and ſets it home upon the Heart; and there is an experience of its Power; the Word is not aright learned, 1 *Theſſ.* 1. 5. *Our Goſpel came to you, not in Word onely, but in Power alſo, and in the Holy Ghoſt and in much Aſſurance.* The Holy Ghoſt made you ſenſible of the Goſpels Efficacy, and its Efficacy aſſured you of its Divinity. So 1 *Theſſ.* 2. 13. *Ye received it not as the Word of men, but as it is in Truth the Word of God, which worketh effectually in you that believe.* This Word ſhews its Power in *pulling down ſtrong holds, in caſting down Imaginations; and every high thing that exalteth it ſelf againſt the Knowledg of God; and in bringing thoughts into Captivity and Obedience to Chriſt,* 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. The Spirit of God wrought *Signs and Wonders and divers Miracles, according to his own Will*; for the Confirmation of the Goſpel when firſt it was publiſhed in the World; and theſe were *part* of the *Spirit's Demonſtration* of its *Truth.* And *Miracles* in the *New Creation* ceaſe not to be *wrought ſtill* by the *ſame Spirit.* The Word is made an effectual means, to make the *dead in Sin alive to God,* to make the *Blind to ſee,* and the *Lame to walk in the Way of Gods Commandments.*

7. Learn-

7. Learning the Word, implies a *ready and Hearty embracing, what the Word of God Offers and Promises.* Mammon and Satan make but *very poor and mean offers* and their *Promises are deceitful,* they can offer nothing but what is temporal, the things they boaſt of are onely good in appearance; and they quickly vaniſh away. Indeed there is ſomething that is *Eternal,* but 'tis *Eternal Wo and Miſery,* that abides the worldly and the wicked; but this Satan ſtudiouſly endeavours to conceal from them. Whereas the offers of the Goſpel are great and glorious, worthy of all acceptation, and by all to be accepted; the Promiſes here are *ſo firm,* that they ſhall *remain,* when *Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away,* Pſal. 119. 152. *Concerning thy Teſtimonies, I have known of old, that thou haſt founded them for ever.* If the Children of men might *have their wiſh,* and would *wiſh but wiſely*; they would wiſh, for what the Word aſſures to all Accepters of it. Here is juſtifying Righteouſneſs for the guilty and Condemned; here is Healing, Sanctifying Grace for the Diſeaſed and Defiled; here is Strength for the Weak, and Comfort for them that are caſt down; and for loſt Souls great and Everlaſting Salvation. How can he be ſaid to have learned the Word of God; or to know when he is well offer'd; by whom ſuch offers are refuſed?

8. Learn-

8. Learning the Word, implies the *Subjection and Conformity of the whole man to the commands of the Word of God.* Promiſes and Priviledges are to be ſtudied and embraced; and Precepts and Commands are to be received. He that *caſts the commands behind his back*, is very *Preſumptuous* in *applying Promiſes to himſelf.* That Hope will make a man aſhamed, which is not accompanied with Obedience. Hearken to the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 119. 166, 167, 168. *Lord I have hoped for thy Salvation, and done thy Commandments. My Soul hath kept thy Teſtimonies, and I love them exceedingly, I have kept thy Precepts and thy Teſtimonies, for all my ways are before Thee.* He that has learned the Word of God, knows that *the Law is not made void by Faith, but eſtabliſhed*, Rom. 3. 31. *Do we then by Faith, make void the Law, through Faith? God forbid, yea we eſtabliſh the Law.* Chriſt the Churches Head and Prophet, in his Sermon upon the Mount, ſhews the extent of the Law, requiring Purity in the Heart and Thoughts, as well as in the Life and Actions, condemns them *who ſhall break the leaſt of theſe Commands and ſhall teach men ſo*; but thoſe that *teach and do them, he owns as great in his Kingdom*, Mat. 5. 19. The Law ſpoken from *Mount Sinai* is eſtabliſhed by the Legiſlator Chriſt, in *Mount Sion* as a *Rule of Righteouſneſs.* And they who are rightly inſtructed, *which walk accor-*

according to this Rule, both *Heart* and *Converſation* will be order'd according to its Direction, and *Peace and Mercy will be upon them*, and hereby they ſhew themſelves indeed the *Iſrael* of God.

9. Learning the Word, implies a *living in Expectation and Hope of that Glory which God in his Word has revealed*, Rom. 5. 2. *By whom we have acceſs by Faith into this Grace wherein we ſtand, and rejoice in Hope of the Glory of God.* The Apoſtle tells that our Saviour Jeſus Chriſt hath *aboliſhed Death, and hath brought Life and Immortality to light by the Goſpel.* What Joy is ſet before us to encourage patient continuance in Faith and well-doing! Were it not for this; the *Diſciples of Chriſt would be of all men moſt miſerable!* 1 Cor. 15. 19. But ſince the *Glory hoped* for is ſo *ſure* and *near*; they are the *onely Happy ones* in the World. He that learned the Word aright, Heaven is in his Eye; there is his Heart and Treaſure. He knows he cannot be perfectly Holy or Happy, till he come thither; and when once come there; Holineſs and Happineſs will be perfect in degree; and endleſs in Duration. Nothing therefore can *move him away from the Hope of the Goſpel.* He abides in the Word, and the Word in him; and *ſtands faſt in the Lord himſelf*, and at laſt receives the bleſſed Life that is promiſed, 1 *Joh.* 2. 24, 25. *Let that therefore abide*

in

in you which ye have heard from the beginning; if that which ye have heard from the beginning ſhall remain in you; ye alſo ſhall continue in the Son and in the Father; and this is the Promiſe that he hath Promiſed us, even Eternal Life.

And if *all this* be implied in *Learning the Word of God*;

How many may *Conſcience* reproach for never having learned the Word to this day! *Strangers* they are to its *Power*, and *haters* of its *Purity*, and moſt fooliſhly and wickedly neglect that Grace and Salvation, which is there tender'd to them!

How many may *Sigh for Sorrow*, that they have learned the Word of God *no better*! that their Faith is no ſtronger, their delight in the Word of God no greater! and that there are ſo many defects in their Obedience to it!

How ſhould we all *groan* with *earneſt deſires*, that *God Himſelf* would be our *Teacher*, and make us *right Learners* of his Word! And if *He* is pleaſed to teach us, how Bleſſed, Holy, and Wiſe will his teaching make us! and *ſuch* alſo we ſhall *continue*; for that teaching will have a laſting effect upon us, *Pſal.* 119. 33, *Teach me O Lord the Way of thy Statutes, and I ſhall keep it unto the end.*

In

In the ſecond Place, I am to ſhew the *Influence*, that the *Rod of God* has to make his *Word the better Learned.*

1. The Rod of Affliction *awakens the Conſcience.* So that it is very punctual in doing its Office; Conſcience being ſtartled cauſes *fear*; Where there was too much *unconcernedneſs* and *ſtupidity* before. The Conſciences of *Joſephs Brethren* after the great Injury they did him; lay in a deep ſleep for many Years together; but Diſtreſs and Affliction awakened them, *Gen.* 42. 21. *They ſaid one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our Brother, in that we ſaw the anguiſh of his Soul, when he beſought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this diſtreſs come upon us.* Conſcience being awakened is full of remorſe, becauſe the Word of God has been obſerved with no more care. Conſcience alſo is ſtill urging, *To the Law, and to the Teſtimony.* This is the way to be freed from Trouble, and to attain to Peace, *Pſal.* 119. 165. *Great Peace have they that Love thy Law.* Gal. 6. 16. *And as many as walk according to this Rule, Peace be on them, and Mercy, and upon the* Iſrael *of God.*

2. The Rod of Affliction, *takes off from worldly Buſineſs and Diverſions*; and hereupon they that are afflicted, *are at better leaſure to conſider their ways*, Eccleſ. 7. 14. *In the day of*

Adverſity conſider. God is not to be *complained of* for *puniſhing* Sin; but men who are puniſhed ſhould *ſearch and try their ways and turn to Him.* Lam. 3. 39, 40. *Inconſiderateneſs* is ſpoken of, as the occaſion of a World of Wickedneſs, and 'tis exclaimed againſt as very offenſive and inexcuſable, *Iſa.* 1. 2, 3. *Hear O Heavens and give ear O Earth, for the Lord hath ſpoken; I have nouriſhed and brought up Children, and they have rebelled againſt me; The Ox knows his owner, and the Aſs his Maſters Crib, but* Iſrael *doth not know, my People doth not conſider!* Now the more any conſider what they do; the greater heed they will take to the Word of God; for this Word Counſels ſafely; it directs and leads in the way of Peace and Truth, and Life, *Prov.* 6. 23. *For the Commandment is a Lamp, and the Law is Light, and Reproofs of Inſtruction are the way of Life.*

3. The Rod of Affliction *brings God to remembrance, whoſe the Word is*; and God being remembred, his Word is the more awfully regarded. Moſt men forget the Lord all their days, *Jer.* 2. 32. *Can a Maid forget her Ornaments? or a Bride her attire? yet my People have forgotten me days without number.* And forgetting the *Lord* they forget *themſelves*, their *Duty* and their *Intereſt.* Affliction is a means to bring God to mind; and his hand being lifted up, and there being a Rod in his hand;

hand; there is a more heedful looking into his Word to know his Pleaſure, and what is the ground of his preſent diſpleaſure and controverſie. *Job* was deſirous to *know his Tranſgreſſion and Sin*; and wherefore it *was that God hid his Face and counted him for his Enemy*, Job 13. 23, 24.

4. The Rod of Affliction, brings *Iniquity to remembrance, which is contrary to the Word of God.* The very *firſt ſtroke* of Correction, how of a ſudden has it *opened mens Eyes*, and *marſhall'd* their *Sins* more *terrible than an Army with Banners* before them! *Pſal.* 50. 21. *I will reprove thee and ſet them in Order before thine Eyes.* Now the remembrance of Sin is a great ingredient in true Contrition and Repentance, which the Word of God ſo often calls for, *Ezek.* 36. 31. *Then ſhall ye remember your evil ways, and doings that have not been good, and ſhall loath your ſelves in your own ſight for your Iniquities and Abominations.* To remember Sin in *Hell*, will be to remember Sin *too late*; and the *Eternal Remembrance* of it, and the *Folly and Perverſeneſs* in giving way to it; will be a *great part* of the Sinners *Eternal Torment.* But to remember Sin, *in Affliction*; is very profitable; how evident now is the deceitfulneſs of it! All its pretences of Impunity, Gain, and Pleaſure; are found altogether vain. This is *One great Leſſon* of the Rod. *Sin cheats all its Servants, and quickly ends in Sorrow.*

5. The Rod of Affliction, brings *Duty to remembrance, which the Word of God requires.* Omiſſion and neglect of Duty, and negligence in Duty, are then reflected on with grief; for if Duty had been more ſeriouſly and frequently performed, poſſibly the ſtroke *might not have been felt*; and ſuppoſe *it had*; improving of Ordinances might have furniſhed the Heart with *more Faith and Patience to have born it.* And now *ſays the Rod* be *better acquainted with the Word*, know thy Duty, and from what *Principle* thou art to act; after what *manner*, and to what *end.* Act from Spiritual Life, let Faith work by Love; and the more there is of the Heart and will, in Obedience; 'tis the better; and let it be the conſtant deſign, that *God in all things may be glorified through Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Pet. 4. 11. Affliction vehemently urges unto practical Godlineſs, and unto walking in newneſs of Life. *Doers of the Word are bleſſed in their deed*, whereas thoſe Profeſſours are *Self-deceivers*, who ſatisfie themſelves with a *Faith which Works not*, but *is dead*, Jam. 1. 22. *But be ye doers of the Word, and not hears only deceiving your own ſelves.* V. 25. *Whoſo looketh into the perfect Law of Liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the Work; this man ſhall be bleſſed in his deed.*

6. The

6. The Rod of Affliction *brings Death to remembrance*, and *Death* brings the *Night*, when the *Work*, which the Word of God calls for, *can be done no more*, Joh. 9. 4. *I muſt work the Works of him that ſent me while 'tis day, the night cometh when no man can work.* When a man ſeriouſly meditates on Death, how *wiſe* will it make him! he will number his days aright, and do the Work for which time and days are given him, *Pſal.* 90. 12. *Teach us ſo to number our days, that we may apply our Hearts to Wiſdom.*

And if Death be brought to remembrance by Affliction; *Judgment* which follows at the heels of Death will alſo be thought of. And this Judgment will be according to the Word of God, for this Book among others will be opened at the great day; and Sentence paſs'd according to it, *Joh.* 12. 48. *The Word which I have ſpoken the ſame ſhall judge him at the laſt day.* The Conſideration of a future Judgment how will it *quicken* to the *ſtudy*, *ſearch*, and Practiſe of the Word! If the Word now *bind* thee, becauſe of thy *Unbelief and Impenitency* in Sin; thou art *bound in Heaven.* If the Word *now condemns* thee; continuing as thou art; the *Judge* alſo will moſt certainly condemn thee. But if the *Word* at preſent does *acquit* thee, the *Judge* alſo will *abſolve* thee. If the Word pronounces thee bleſſed, becauſe

Poor in Spirit, Meek, a Mourner for Sin, one that hungers and thirſts after Righteouſneſs, becauſe pure in Heart, a Peace-maker, and one that is willing to ſuffer Perſecution for Righteouſneſs ſake; rather than ceaſe the Practice of Righteouſneſs, Mat. 5. 3, 10. Being thus pronounced Bleſſed by the Word; Our Lord will never contradict himſelf; but at laſt will ſay to thee, *Come thou Bleſſed of my Father inherit the Kingdom prepared for thee from the Foundation of the World,* Mat. 25. 34.

I come in the *laſt place* to the *Application.*

USE I. Of *Information*: From the Doctrine we may learn ſeveral uſeful Leſſons.

1. We may be inſtructed concerning the *end* of Affliction, *which is our truer Knowledg and Holineſs.* The *Rod ſends* us to the *Word*, from whence *Wiſdom* comes, *Prov.* 2. 6. *For the Lord giveth Wiſdom, out of his Mouth cometh Knowledg and Underſtanding.* And this Word is the Word not onely of Wiſdom but of *Grace* alſo; a means to work, and to increaſe it; until 'tis perfected in Glory, *Act.* 20. 32. *And now Brethren I commend you to God and to the Word of his Grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an Inheritance among all them that are ſanctified.*

2. God

2. God is very *much provoked when his Word is contemned*; therefore he afflicts that his Word may be regarded; ſurely then a diſregard to it angers him. 'Tis great Condeſcenſion in God to ſpeak to man; 'tis great kindneſs to ſpeak to man for his own good; but when man ſhall neither regard his own good, nor the Lords condeſcending kindneſs; this very much incenſes God againſt him. The Apoſtles Caution is very ſtrict, and with a great deal of Reaſon, *Heb.* 12. 25. *See that ye refuſe not him that ſpeaketh; for if they eſcaped not who refuſed him that ſpake on Earth; much more ſhall not we eſcape, if we turn away from Him that ſpeaketh from Heaven.* When lighter Afflictions are ineffectual to make men ſtand in awe of the Word of God; deſolating Judgments many times follow, 2 *Chron.* 36. 16. *But they mocked the Meſſengers of God, and deſpiſed his Words, and miſuſed his Prophets, until the Wrath of the Lord aroſe againſt his People, till there was no remedy.*

3. When God is very angry; a *believing Subjection to his Word is the way to have his Wrath appeaſed.* Indeed nothing ſatisfies the Juſtice of God, but Chriſts Sacrifice of himſelf upon the Croſs for Sin; nothing Merits the favour of God; but the Obedience and Sufferings of his Dear Son. But yet Obedi-

ence to the Word of God, is like taking away the fewel from the fire, whereby the fire is extinguiſhed, when according to the Word, we ceaſe to do evil, and learn to doi well; the ground of Gods controverſie is at an end. It was a dreadful Propheſie, *yet forty days and* Nineveh *ſhall be deſtroyed.* This Word was believed, and as it was a loud call to Repentance; ſo that call was anſwered and obeyed; it iſſued well, the *Ninevites* repent of their wickedneſs, God repents of his Anger, and does not pour it upon them, *Jon.* 3. 10. *And God ſaw their Works, that they turned from their evil ways; and God repented of the evil that he had ſaid, that he would do unto them, and did it not.*

4. When God *lets Sinners alone in a wicked neglect of his Word, without afflicting them, 'tis to be feared, he intends they ſhall dy without Wiſdom.* Gods *forbearing to afflict*; is ſometimes an Argument of *great diſpleaſure,* Iſa. 1. 5. *Why ſhould ye be ſtricken any more? ye will ſtill revolt more and more.* And being ſtricken no more, they are the more hardned from his fear; till at laſt *as Fiſhes are taken in an evil Net; and as Birds are caught in the Snare*; ſo theſe Sinners *are ſnared in an evil time; when it falleth ſuddenly upon them.* Eccleſ. 9. 12.

5. Saints which *are not exerciſed with Affliction,*

fliction, had need to be very careful, *that gentler methods which are uſed, be effectual to their Progreſs in Grace and Holineſs.* 'Tis found *harder* to know how *to abound*, than *how to want*; more difficult to avoid the Snares of Proſperity, than to overcome the Temptations of Adverſity. Hence that Caution, *Deut.* 8. 10, 11. *When thou haſt eaten and art full, beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his Commandments, and his Judgments, and his Statutes which I command thee this day.* If you ſeldom feel the Rod; but onely fair means are uſed; Oh admire Divine goodneſs, and with great care take heed to his Word, being very thankful and fruitful together. And if in the *height of Proſperity*, where neither *frown* is ſeen in *Gods face*, nor *blow felt* from his *hand*, He is with *Joy remembred and ſerved*; this Obedience is with great *evidence* of *Sincerity* and *Uprightneſs.*

6. Saints who *after feel the Rod of Affliction ſhould have a more than ordinary regard to the Word of God.* They *ſhould tremble at it*, for God has a ſpecial *regard to them that tremble at his Word*, Iſa. 66. 2. And they ſhould *rejoice with trembling*; *in it.* Saints who are frequently chaſtiſed, are intruſted with the more Talents, and ſhould improve them accordingly. Another day we ſhall be called to account, what *Benefit we have received by Afflictions*; as well as *how we have profited under Ordi-*

Ordinances. Frequent Troubles ſhould make our *Conſciences more tender*, Sin by the *blows* of the Rod ſhould be *ſtruck more dead*; we ſhould live more as *Pilgrims on Earth*, our *Eye* ſhould be *more* upon the *Heavenly Inheritance*; and the *Apple of our Eye* ſhould not be kept with greater *charineſs*, than we keep the *Word of God*, Prov. 7. 2. *Keep my Commandments and live, and my Law as the Apple of thine Eye.*

USE II. Of *Counſel* to All to *incline their Ears and apply their Hearts to learn the Word of God.* That you may attain to *this Learning* (incomparably the trueſt and beſt Learning in the World) is the deſign of *Preaching*; and you ſee 'tis the deſign of *Afflicting Providences.* And Mercies are beſtowed with the ſame intent, *Pſal.* 105. 45. All the deliverances wrought for *Iſrael*, God wrought them to this end, *That they might obſerve his Statutes, and keep his Laws.* That Wiſdom, which is to be found in the Word of God, is a *Treaſure* more *valuable* than all the *Treaſures on Earth*; and this Treaſure *lies deep*; but 'tis highly *worth ſearching* for. And therefore *Solomon* ſignifies to us, that we ſhould *ſeek for it, as for Silver, and ſearch for it as for hid Treaſures*, Prov. 2. 4. *If thou ſeekeſt her as Silver, and ſearcheſt for her as for hid Treaſures; then ſhalt thou underſtand the fear of the Lord and find the Knowledge of God.* Nay this

this Word of God is not only your *Treaſure*; but 'tis as much as *your Life* is worth, to neglect this Word of God, *Deut.* 32. 46, 47. *Set your Hearts unto all the Words, which I teſtifie among you this day, for it is not a vain thing for you, for it is your Life.*

Here I ſhall anſwer two Queſtions, and ſo conclude this Diſcourſe.

The *Firſt* is, *Which Way this Learning in the Word of God may be attained?*

The *Second* is, *What are ſufficient and comfortable Evidences; that the Word of God is truly Learned?*

The *Firſt* Queſtion is, *Which Way this Learning in the Word of God may be attained?* Unto this I Anſwer,

1. Let every *Rod you feel cauſe a ſtricter ſearch into the Word.* 'Tis part of the Rods Language, *Tolle, lege*; take the Word, and Read, and be better acquainted with it. The Rod is uſed in Grammar Schools; that Authors there may be more diligently Studied. God uſes *his* Rod in his own School; that *his Book* the *Holy Bible* may be the better underſtood and practiſed. There is not *any Affliction*, but it *ought* to be lookt upon as an *Admonition* to take greater heed to the *Holy Scrip-*

Scripture, which is profitable for Doctrine, for Reproof, for Correction, for Inſtruction in Righteouſneſs, that the Man of God may be perfect, throughly furniſhed unto all good works, 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17.

2. Be ſenſible, that *true and ſaving Knowledge is from above, therefore ask it from thence,* Jam. 1. 5. *If any of you lack Wiſdom, let him ask it of God; who gives to all men liberally without upbraiding; and it ſhall be given him.* And *V.* 17. *Every good and perfect Gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of Lights.* And as God is the Father of Lights, ſo his Spirit is the Spirit of Wiſdom and Revelation, *Eph.* 1. 17, 18. He *enlightens the Eyes of the Underſtanding,* and puts ſaving Knowledge into the Heart. What an *Inſtructer* is the *Spirit of the Lord*! He not onely reveals Gods Counſel; but gives an Heart to apprehend it, and to be anſwerably affected with it. He not onely *ſpeaks the Word,* which it does ſo infinitely concern all to know; but he gives alſo the *Ear to hear,* the *Eye to ſee,* and the *Heart to underſtand.*

3. Reſolve when *Inſtructed to Praiſe your Inſtructer*; thus does the Pſalmiſt Purpoſe and Promiſe, *Pſal.* 119. 7. *I will Praiſe thee, with uprightneſs of Heart, when I ſhall have learned thy Righteous Judgments.* How joyful was the Hallelujah! when the Pſalmiſt had ſaid; *He giveth his Word unto* Jacob, *his Statutes and his*

his Judgments to the Children of Iſrael, *Pſal.* 147. 19, 20. And *Pſal.* 119. 164. *Seven times a day do I Praiſe thee, becauſe of thy Righteous Judgments.* And *V.* 62. He had ſaid, upon the ſame account, he would *ariſe at midnight and give thanks* unto God.

4. Look unto *Jeſus in whom are hid all the Treaſures of Wiſdom and Knowledge,* Col. 2. 3. Chriſt is the Churches Lawgiver and Prophet. He declares the Father, whom no man at any time hath ſeen, and *no man knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whom the Son ſhall reveal him,* Mat. 11. 17. He opens the Eyes and *Underſtanding to underſtand the Scripture, Luk.* 24. 45. The Goſpel is as it were a Sealed Book, till he opens it; a right underſtanding of *the Things of God,* and which *belong to your Peace,* is both Chriſts Purchaſe; and the Work and *Effect of his illuminating Spirit.*

5. Pray much for *Meekneſs and Humility; and let not any deceitful luſt be harboured in the Heart.* A Promiſe of Guidance is made to the Meek and Lowly, *Pſal.* 25. 8, 9. *Good and upright is the Lord, therefore will he teach Sinners in the way, the Meek will he guide in Judgment, and the Meek will he teach his Way.* Make no Proviſion for any fleſhly or worldly Luſts, for theſe *Luſts* of the *Heart* influence the *Head*; and hinder the Light from ſhining there

there ſo clearly and powerfully, both *Mind and Conſcience* by fulfilling theſe Luſts will be *defiled*. The Apoſtle plainly intimates, that *the old man muſt be put off which is corrupt according to deceitful Luſts; or elſe we can never be renewed in the Spirit of our Mind*, Eph. 4. 22, 23. In ſhort, be willing to know the Truth, that you may be ſanctified by the Truth. Look into the *perfect Law of Liberty*; and count you, walk *moſt at Liberty*; when you walk moſt *accurately and exactly* according to this Law. Cry for Knowledge in Order to Affection and Practiſe; that's the Way to attain to great underſtanding in the Word of Righteouſneſs. Talents you ſhall ſtill be intruſted with, when you are thus ready to Trade with them.

The *Second* Queſtion follows, *What are ſufficient and comfortable Evidences, that the Word of God is truly Learned?*

What has been ſpoken already may be in part an Anſwer to this Queſtion. But that this great Caſe may be more fully reſolved; I ſhall add theſe Particulars.

1. You have truly Learned the Word of God, when *you ſtand in awe of it*. When Conſcience does urge, and the whole man does reverence the Words Authority. And the Heart concludes, that *God muſt be obeyed whatever*

ever come on't, and that *nothing can excuſe diſobedience to his Commands.* This Holy awe of the Word muſt *break the force* of the ſtrongeſt Temptations from worldly Gain, and ſinful Pleaſures; and it muſt *Swallow up the fear of the greateſt Men*, who will diſlike you for the ſake of Righteouſneſs, *Pſal.* 119. 161. *Princes have perſecuted me without a cauſe; but my Heart ſtandeth in awe of thy Word.* Princes commands and threats are not ſo much to be minded, as Gods commands, and the threatnings wherewith they are enforced. When Princes have inflicted Temporal Death; they are come to their *Ne plus ultra*, they can go no further; Eternal Life and Death are not in their Power; but how is God to be ſanctified and dreaded, who can reward, or puniſh for ever in the World to come!

2. You have truly Learned the Word of God, *when you preferr it before all things, which are really of leſs value.* Worldly Wiſdom, Riches, Might, and earthly Greatneſs, are very deſpicable, compared with that Knowledge of God, which this Word is a means to convey to us, *Jer.* 9. 23, 24. *Thus ſaith the Lord, let not the wiſe man Glory in his Wiſdom, neither let the mighty man Glory in his Might; let not the rich man Glory in his Riches. But let him that glorïeth, Glory in this, that he underſtandeth and knoweth Me.* See how the Policy of the greateſt Potentates on Earth

Earth is disparaged in Comparison of Scriptural Wisdom, and not without sufficient Reason. The Policy of Princes, and themselves perish together. But Believers who are made wise by the Word of God, do mind, and attain unto, and shall be unmoveably possess't of, an Eternal Glory and Kingdom, 1 *Cor.* 2. 6, 7. *Howbeit we speak Wisdom among them that are perfect, yet not the Wisdom of this World, nor of the Princes of this World, which come to nought; but we speak the Wisdom of God in a Mystery; even the hidden Wisdom, which God ordained before the World unto our Glory.* In my Text the Psalmist having said, *'Tis good for me that I have been afflicted,* presently expresses his Estimation of the Word, above thousands of Gold and Silver. If the Word has an *higher Room in your Judgments and Affections* after Affliction, Affliction has *certainly done you good,* and you have learned the Word to good purpose.

3. You have truly Learned the Word of God; *if you Love and Delight therein, and make it your continual Meditation,* Psal. 119. 15, 16. *I will Meditate in thy Precepts and have respect unto thy Ways, I will delight my self in thy Statutes, I will not forget thy Word.* Here are *excellent Rules,* and they that walk by them are *perfected more and more*; for they become *more gloriously like to God himself*; here are *clean* and *safe* Ways; Promises of the

the *good things of Time*, ſo *far as they are good for any of you*; and of the *infinitely better things of Eternity*. All this may be well matter of great delight. The more you love the Word, the greater will be your Peace, and you will hold on in the beſt ways without offence or ſtumbling, *Pſal.* 119. 165. *Great Peace have they that love thy Law, and nothing ſhall offend them.*

4. You have truly learned the Word of God, when you *keep it both in Heart and Life*. Not to keep it in the Life, is a *ſcandalous contempt of the Word*; not to keep it in the Heart, though there be a ſpecious form and ſhew of Religon, is but *demure and abominable Hypocriſie*. If the Word be in your Hearts, how will it as *nouriſhing Food well concocted there* make you *ſtrong in Spirit*! It will make your Hearts both *clean* and *comfortable*, and as a *powerful Antidote* expel *Sins Poyſon*, Pſal. 119. 11. *Thy Word have I hid in my Heart, that I might not Sin againſt Thee.* Let not Sin, but the *Word Reign in your Mortal Body*, that none of the Members of it may be defiled and debaſed in wicked Works and Services. Prize all the Ordinances and Inſtitutions of the Word of God; *neglect* none; be *negligent* in none. The more theſe are prized and uſed, the greater Reaſon you will ſee to perſiſt in the uſe of them, for the greater ſpiritual Benefit will ſenſibly be reaped.

That Noble Pair, had learned the Word indeed, of whom it was ſaid, *Luk.* 1. 6. *And they were both righteous before God, walking in all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord blameleſs.*

5. You have truly learned the Word of God, when your *care is to commend it and to adorn it in all things.* The more this Word is in your Mouths, the more Edifying will your Diſcourſe be. Speak much *of* this Word and *for* it, nay if you ſpeak much of it as it is; you will ſpeak for it, for the Word will *commend it ſelf.* Mind thoſe Injunctions, *Eph.* 4. 29. *Let no corrupt Communication proceed out of your Mouths, but that which is good to the uſe of Edifying, and which may adminiſter Grace to the hearers.* And *Deut.* 6. 6, 7. *Theſe Words, which I command thee this day, ſhall be in thy Heart; and thou ſhalt talk of them, when thou ſitteſt in thy Houſe; and when thou walkeſt by the way; when thou lieſt down; and when thou riſeſt up.* How can it be ſaid the Word has been entertained in *your* Hearts; if you are not ready to commend it that it may have a Room in the Hearts of *others*? And let not your Commendation of the Word be *verbal* onely but *real.* Let your Converſations ever become the Goſpel, Live ſuitably to ſuch a pure, Holy and Heavenly Word, and *walk worthy of God* who by this Word *has called you to his Kingdom and Glory,* 1 Theſ. 2. 12.

6. You

6. You have truly learned the Word of God, *when you do every things by its Direction*, not onely your Duty towards God, but your Duty towards Man. In *all your ways*, *God* is to be eyed and *acknowledged*, that by his Word your *Paths may be directed*, Prov. 3. 6. *Trade* muſt be managed by the Word, and the rules of Truth and Juſtice and Equity laid down there; this is the way to *grow Rich* with a *Bleſſing*, and without the *Addition of Sorrow*. A *Family* muſt be order'd by this Word; and all the Members of Families, and the Governours of them, muſt learn their Relative Duties from the Word of God. *Recreations* muſt be regulated hereby, elſe there may quickly be a forgetting of God, an exceſſive delight in them; and too great an expence of precious time. *Nothing can be well done, if the Word be not regarded in the doing of it, and nothing can be ill done or miſcarry, under the Words Conduct.*

7. You have truly learned the Word of God, *if you never depart from it.* Perſevering in Obedience will prove you ἀληθῶς μαθηταὶ *indeed Diſciples*, Joh. 8. 31. *Jeſus ſaid to thoſe* Jews, *who believed in him; if ye continue in my Word, then are ye my Diſciples indeed.* This ſhews the Lord himſelf has been your Teacher, and is teaching you ſtill and ſtrengthning you together, *Pſal.* 119. 33. *Teach me* O

Lord the way of thy Statutes, and I ſhall keep it to the end. And *V.* 102. he ſays, *I have not departed from thy Judgments for thou haſt taught me.* Stick unto *his Teſtimonies*, and *cleave unto the Lord* with ſuch a Reſolution as neither Mammon, Sin, nor Satan may ever *ſhake.* You can never change your Lord or his Service, but you muſt change *infinitely for the worſe*; therefore be *ſtedfaſt, unmoveable, always abounding in his work.* Though the *Mountains depart, and the Hills be removed*; yet do you *abide with God*, and *ſtand faſt in the Faith unto the Death*; that you may receive the Promiſed *Crown of Life*, and wear it for evermore.

FINIS.

ERRATA.

PAge 49. *line* 16. *for* broken *read* troden, *p.* 53. *l.* 9. *f.* in *r.* as, *p.* 56. *l.* 29. *f.* the *r.* yet, *p.* 64. *l.* 16. *f.* diligent *r.* vigilant, *p.* 76. *l.* 17. *f.* undenied *r.* underived, *p.* 77. *l.* 12. *f.* Tabb *r.* Fable.

Books Printed for, and ſold by Tho. Parkhurſt, *at the* Bible *and* Three Crowns *in* Cheapſide, *near* Mercers *Chappel.*

A Body of practical Divinity conſiſting of above 176 Sermons on the leſſer Catechiſm compoſed by the Reverend Aſſembly of Divines at *Weſtminſter*, with a Supplement of ſome Sermons on ſeveral Texts of Scripture, by *Tho. Watſon* formerly Miniſter of St. *Stephens Walbrook*, Printed from his own hand writing, recommended by ſeveral Miniſters to Maſters of Families and others.

Synodicon in Gallia Reformata, or the Acts, Decrees, Deciſions, Canons of the Reformed Churches in *France*. Being 1. A moſt faithful and impartial Hiſtory of the riſe, growth, perfection and decay of the Reformation in that Kingdom, with its fatal Cataſtrophe upon the revocation of the Edict at *Nants* in the year 1685. 2. The Confeſſion of Faith and Diſcipline of thoſe Churches. 3. A Collection of Speeches, Letters, Sacred Politicks, Caſes of Conſcience, and Controverſies in Divinity determined and reſolved by thoſe Grave Aſſemblies. 4. Many excellent expedients for preventing and healing Schiſms in the Churches and for re-uniting the diſmembred Body of divided Proteſtants. 5. The Laws, Government and Maintenance of the Colledges, Univerſities, and Miniſters, together, with their Exerciſe of Diſcipline upon delinquent Miniſters and Church Members. 6. A Record of very many illuſtrious Events of Divine Providence relating

ting to those Churches. The whole collected and composed out of the Original Manuscript Acts of those renowned Synods, a work never before extant in any Language, in two Vol. by *John Quick*, &c. Fol.

The Sure Mercies of *David*: Or, a Second Part of Heart-treasure. Wherein is contained the sum and substance of Gospel-mercies purchased by Christ, and Promised in the Covenant of Grace, together with the several ways how they are made sure to all the Heirs of Promise, and how they are to be improved for the Saints Fort and Defence, Settlement and Incouragement in shaking and backsliding times. By *O. Heywood.*

Closet-prayer a Christian Duty: Or, a Treatise upon *Mat.* 6. 6. By *O. Heywood.*

Baptismal Bonds renewed. Being some Meditations upon *Psal.* 50. 5. By *O. H.* M. A.

Meetness for Heaven promoted in some brief Meditations upon *Colos.* 1. 12. Discovering the nature and necessity of habitual and actual Meetness for Heaven here, in all that hope for Heaven hereafter. By *O. H.*

An Epistolary Discourse on the great assistances to a Christians Faith, and for a more Intire Rest and Assurance in the highest Trials and Adventures thereof. With a Second Part, upon the Present Times, and these rare Vicissitudes of Providence in the Publick State of *Britain* in this Age. To which an Appendix is added in the Close. By *R. Fleming.*

A Discourse of Earthquakes; as they are Supernatural and Premonitory Signs to a Nation; with

a reſpect to what hath occurred in this Year 1692. And ſome ſpecial Reflections thereon. As alſo on that Security and Aſſurance of Mind, which is attainable in the Light and Power of Religion, under the greateſt Surprizals and Terrors of Senſe. With ſome Enquiry upon the Grounds, both of our Fears and Hopes, as to the publick State of the Church of Chriſt in this Day. By the Author of the Fulfilling of the Scriptures.

The Confirming Work of Religion: Or its Great Things made plain, by their Primary Evidences and Demonſtrations. Whereby the meaneſt in the Church, may ſoon be made able to render a Rational account of their Faith. Written by *R. Fleming*, Author of the Fulfilling of the Scriptures.

A Defence of Mr. *M. H's.* Brief Enquiry into the Nature of Schiſm, and the Vindication of it. With Reflections npon a Pamphlet called the Review, *&c.* And a Brief Hiſtorical Account of Nonconformity, from the Reformation to this Preſent Time.

England's Alarm: Being an account of God's moſt Conſiderable Diſpenſations of Mercy and Judgment towards theſe Kingdoms for Fourteen Years laſt paſt. And alſo, of the ſeveral ſorts of Sins and Sinners therein; Eſpecially the Murmurers againſt the Preſent Government. With an Earneſt Call to ſpeedy Humiliation, Supplication and Reformation, as the Chief Means of Proſpering their Majeſties Counſels and Preparations. Dedicated to the King and Queen.

A Sermon Preached at the Funeral of the Reverend Mr. *Thomas Shewell*, Maſter of Arts, and Miniſter of the Goſpel in *Coventry*. Who went up well into the Pulpit, *Jan.* 15. and having Prayed, and Named the Text, *Rom.* 5. 12. was ſeiſed by an Apoplexy, and dyed within a few Hours. By *William Tongue*, Miniſter of the Goſpel.

The Good of Early Obedience. By *M. Mead.*

A Practical Expoſ. on the 130. *Pſalm.*

The Grace and Duty of being Spiritual Minded.

The Declaration of the Glorious Miſtory of the Perſon of Chriſt. Theſe three by *J. Owen*, D. D.

Redemption of Time, the Duty and Wiſdom of Chriſtians in evil days. By *S. Wade* Miniſter at *Hamerſmith.*

The Vanity of Man, being a Diſcourſe, fitted for Funeral occaſions. By *S. Shaw.*

Several Diſcourſes concerning the actual Providence of God in three Parts.

Above one hundred Sermons on the *Canticles.* Theſe two by the Reverend *John Collings*, D. D. of *Norwich.*

FINIS.